

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND.

HISTORY

OF THE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
IN IRELAND,

FOR READERS ON THIS SIDE THE ATLANTIC,

BY

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TORONTO.



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P R E F A C E.

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland is not, and never was, numerically a large body. At present, its adherents, all told, barely exceed six hundred thousand. Fifty years ago the figure stood much higher, but emigration to the United States and the British Colonies has done much, in the long interval, to thin its ranks. Its history, therefore, may naturally be supposed to be lacking in the interest that attaches to sections of the Church of Christ, whose membership is immeasurably greater, and whose christian work presents much larger proportions. Yet, such a supposition would be hardly just, and when closely and carefully examined will be found to be scarcely tenable.

There can be no doubt that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland has proved itself to be, to that country, the greatest blessing with which it has been favoured during the last three hundred years. It has given to it in its purest form the truth, from which springs the righteousness that exalts a nation. It has always been careful to instruct the people who worship at its altars in Christian doctrine and morality ; and, with this great end in view, it has looked carefully to the training of its ministers, given to the ministry of the Word a prominent place in its church services, and made special provision for the religious teaching of the young. It would be hardly possible, therefore, to over-estimate the benefits it has been the means of conferring upon

all those sections of the country to which its ministrations have extended. It has enriched Ulster, the most populous and important of its provinces, with an intelligent, industrious, and orderly population, and done more than any other agency within its borders to elevate that province to the position of superiority in all material and moral interests that it confessedly occupies over the other provinces of the kingdom. Nor, looking at the present condition of this northern province, where its influence has been most widely diffused and most powerfully felt, can it be regarded as an idle dream to imagine that the day that should witness the happy ingathering of the whole population of Ireland within its pale should also witness the inauguration of an era of peace and prosperity in that hitherto distracted and unfortunate country unknown in any former period of its history, and the elevation of all its provinces to a condition of moral and spiritual pre-eminence that would give it an indisputable claim to be regarded as indeed “The Isle of Saints.”

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland has proved itself to be a blessing to the world at large. Its people at the Revolution did much by their memorable and heroic struggles to promote the cause of constitutional freedom ; and, as multitudes of its adherents have since gone out into many lands, they have carried with them, wherever they have gone, the same ardent love of liberty that then inspired the courage of their forefathers, as well as those deep religious convictions, and those habits of industry and thrift without which no community can prosper. Probably more than any other race they have contributed to the existence and progress of the

Presbyterian church in the United States. That church is, to-day, the largest Presbyterian body in the world, and its membership consists very largely of Irish Presbyterians and the descendants of Irish Presbyterians. The first congregation that was placed on its roll was organized by a native of Ulster, and not a few in the thousands of congregations that have since been added to its ranks owe their existence to the labours of others from the same province, who followed in his footsteps. The influx still continues. Some of the most distinguished Presbyterian ministers in the United States at this moment were born, brought up, and educated in Ulster.

The first Presbytery also in the United States was organized by Ulster men, and, I presume, that in the immense number of the Presbyteries that now cover the vast area of its almost boundless territory, hardly one could be found that does not count on its roll members Irish either by birth or origin. The same holds largely true of all the British Colonies. The progress and prosperity of the Presbyterian Church in all those lands are to a very considerable extent due to the influx of Irish Presbyterians, who carry with them into all places to which they migrate an intelligent attachment to the principles of their faith, and an unbending firmness in their maintenance. It is well-known that the same gifted stock has given to the Presbyterian Church in Canada a large number of its most active and intelligent members, as well as of its ablest and most efficient ministers. It would be difficult, I venture to affirm, to find a Presbyterian congregation in all the Dominion, from the Atlantic

in the East, to the Pacific in the West, that does not embrace within its communion a very considerable representation of this "imperial race." And it would be no less difficult, I am equally confident to affirm, to find within the same area a Presbytery that does not include in its membership several who still fondly look to Ulster as the home of their fathers.

The Irish Presbyterian Church has proved itself to be a blessing to the world at large in yet another sense. It has done much in the field of missionary enterprise during the last fifty years, and its zeal in this great cause is still on the increase. For long it had a hard struggle for existence. In the face of opposition and oppression, dealt out with no sparing hand by despotic monarchs, intolerant parliaments, arbitrary courts of law, and bigoted prelates ; in the face of a still more serious menace to its existence in the presence of dangerous and seductive error within its own bosom, it has done battle right nobly for the truth. And now that the battle is over, and the victory won, its energies, free to flow in a different channel, are vigorously directed to the furtherance of the great work of evangelizing the world committed to the church by her risen Lord, and to the accomplishment of which her various branches are happily addressing themselves with an earnestness that gives promise of the speedy arrival of the hour when

"The beam that shines from Zion hill,
Shall lighten every land ;
The King who reigns in Salem's towers,
Shall all the world command."

In Ireland itself, on the Continent of Europe, in India, in China, among the Jews in different places, it is zealously labouring for the diffusion of the saving knowledge of the gospel. Its scattered children everywhere share in the missionary ardour that glows within its bosom. In the United States ; in the British Colonies ; and notably, in this great Dominion, they are second to none others in the interest they manifest, and the efforts they make for the advancement of the kingdom of universal righteousness and love the Redeemer came to establish, destined, sooner or later, to extend its benign sway over all the nations of the earth.

A church with such a record cannot fall far behind the larger and more influential churches of Christendom in the interest of its story. The history of its past sufferings, and struggles, and achievements, cannot fail to command the earnest attention of all who take pleasure in contemplating the onward march of divine truth, and the progress of Christian civilization ; and must be peculiarly interesting to the thousands and tens of thousands of Presbyterians in this Western world who claim the connection with it of descent from its parentage.

The following work is intended chiefly for readers on this side of the Atlantic, and is meant to furnish all who cherish a filial affection for the church of their fathers, as well as all who value the great principles of divine truth and constitutional freedom, with a concise yet faithful history of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland from the period of its first plantation in Ulster till the present day. The materials that I

have woven into the narrative are drawn chiefly from Reid and Killen's *History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, which Mr. Froude, an eminent living historian, has justly declared to be "the very best book which has been written on these matters," but which is too large and expensive to obtain wide-spread circulation, particularly in these days of busy employment and keen competition when people generally can devote but a small portion of their time to reading and study. I have derived help also from Dr. Killen's *Ecclesiastical History of Ireland*; Dr. Withrow's *Derry and Enniskillen*, and *Historical and Literary Memorials of Presbyterianism in Ireland*, by the same author; *Killinchy, or the Days of Livingstone*, by the late Wm. McComb, Belfast; Dr. Hamilton's *History of the Irish Presbyterian Church*; and an article entitled, *The Plantation of Ulster*, written, I believe, by the late Dr. Croskery, Magee College, Derry, that appeared in an issue of the *Edinburgh Review* for 1869.

It is hoped that the three introductory chapters will be found to add to the interest of the work. The first deals with the Civil and the second with the Ecclesiastical history of Ireland from the earliest times. The third embraces a somewhat lengthened sketch of the Reformation in Ireland.

In the providence of God, my time has been placed very largely at my own disposal, and for some months past, I have devoted much of it to the preparation of this volume, which, I hope, will prove acceptable to all into whose hands it may come, and serve to increase their knowledge of the past history and present condition of a church which, in

the Scriptural character of its doctrines, discipline, polity, and worship, the ability and devotedness of its clergy, the intelligence and piety of its people, the firmness with which for well nigh three hundred years it has maintained the truth amid surrounding darkness, and the zeal with which it is prosecuting its manifold labours for the spread of the gospel all the world over, takes rank among the very foremost of the evangelical churches of Christendom.

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HISTORY
OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND.

CHAPTER I.

A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE CIVIL HISTORY OF IRELAND
FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES.

Little known of the Civil History of Ireland prior to the Christian era—Much of what purports to be its history from that era till the English Conquest in the Twelfth Century liable to grave suspicion—Early known as “The Sacred Island”—Several alleged invasions and colonizations—Never was a nation in the same sense in which England or Scotland was a nation, differing only in relative strength—Ruled by several petty kings—Who were often at war with one another—Intervention of Romans sought—Given by Pope Adrian IV. to Henry II.—Invasion by English barons—Conquest easy—No national army to oppose them—Prendergrast quoted—The spread of the Gospel and the firm maintenance of British power in Ireland, its best hope—Duty of Irishmen of all classes and creeds.

LITTLE is known of the history of Ireland prior to the Christian era, and much of what purports to be its history from that era down till the time of the English Conquest in the twelfth Century is liable to grave suspicion. Dreaming monks and bardic annalists, in the absence of known and ascertained facts, have not hesitated to fill the void with tales, which, gathered to some extent, from previous chronicles of little value, and resting largely upon no higher authority than dim and uncertain tradition, as it circulated among a highly imaginative but ignorant and credulous people, can lay but little claim to credence. A few facts are blended with a large amount of what is obviously fabulous, and a history constructed, which

throughout its entire course, exhibits unmistakable traces of its questionable origin. As we pursue the narrative under the guidance of the laborious compiler, whose literary activity has evidently been stimulated into unwonted effusiveness by a natural and excusable desire to gratify the cravings of national vanity, the suspicion again and again arises that we are moving among scenes as unreal as the visions of dreamland. The people and events that are made to pass in review before us are associated, in many instances at least, with so much that is clearly mythical and legendary, that we can hardly be charged with undue scepticism if we refuse to believe that they ever had a real existence. We are carried back to a period anterior to the flood, and all along the centuries down till the time when the dawn of authentic history gives promise of a more reliable narrative, are regaled with stories which possibly contain some grains of truth, but which, for the most part, are little better than a mass of fables and absurdities.

We have no means of ascertaining who were the first settlers in Ireland, at what time they entered the country, or from whence they came. We are told, it is true, of successive invasions and colonizations by Fir-Bolgs from Greece, Tuatha de Danaan from Scandinavia, and Milesians from Spain ; but, as the last and latest of these events is said to have taken place a thousand years before our era, when King Solomon was reigning in Jerusalem, we are left in utter uncertainty as to the reality of their occurrence. They may have taken place, but the testimony entitling them to rank among the veritable facts of history is wanting. One thing is certain that the present inhabitants of Ireland are an exceedingly mixed race, and that none of the several races they include can establish an unquestionable claim to be regarded as the veritable descendants of "the real Irish" who first colonized the island. The Celt, a name that is

now used to designate representatives of various nationalities, may properly claim that he has been longer a resident in the land than the Saxon, but the one is just as truly a stranger and an alien within its borders as the other. Neither of them, therefore, can claim, on the ground of original settlement, an exclusive right to the island. The people of Antrim and Down are just as truly Irish as the people of Cork or Galway, and the sooner this fact is recognized by both parties, the better it will be for their common country. It is also certain that from a remote antiquity the inhabitants of Ireland were distinguished by an eminently religious temperament, for, long before the dawn of the Christian era, the country was known as "The Sacred Island."

Ireland never was a nation in the same sense in which England or Scotland was a nation, differing only in relative strength. From the earliest times, its inhabitants were divided into tribes, the head of each tribe or clan claiming and exercising independent and exclusive authority within his own territory. According to a MS. in the British Museum, before the English invasion, the number of such tuaths or territories was over two hundred, and each seems to have been under the government of at least one petty *rig* or king. These petty chieftains, like the sovereigns of large and powerful kingdoms in after times, were often at war with one another, and their frequent and bitter feuds involved the country in almost ceaseless bloodshed and misery, seriously retarding its advancement along the path of civilization, even after the introduction of Christianity. Some of the more warlike and ambitious of them were forward to aspire to unlimited supremacy over all the rest and, in some instances, partially succeeded at different periods in the history of the country in reaching the object of their ambition, but none of them was ever able to establish for himself

and his dynasty the sovereignty of the whole island. The authority they severally exercised within their own territories they were naturally anxious to preserve, and so successfully did they, for the most part, guard this valued possession that it was not till the Pope interfered, and handed them over to the sovereignty of England that they lost it. Till then they knew nothing of a common sovereign, whose authority demanded their undivided allegiance; and so free and unfettered was the power they exercised as independent potentates, that in their quarrels with one another, the weaker was ready, in the absence of a supreme central authority to which he might look for protection to invoke foreign aid. As early as A.D. 82, a petty Irish King, who had been driven from his throne by another but more powerful petty sovereign, applied to the Romans, who, a short time before, had effected a settlement in England, for their intervention and aid. The application was favorably regarded, and, for a time, it seemed that Ireland was destined to be added to the Empire of the West. The Romans found, however, more than enough to do in completing the subjugation of Britain, and, consequently, never crossed the Irish Channel. The petty Irish King was left to fight his own battles, and Ireland denied the quickening impulse of Roman civilization. In A.D. 1155, Pope Adrian IV., whose real name was Nicholas Breakspear, and who was the only Englishman who ever filled the Papal chair, in the exercise of his assumed power to dispose of the islands of the Sea as he pleased,—a power which he is said to have inherited from the gift of Constantine—issued a Bull, in which he conferred the sovereignty of Ireland on Henry II., King of England, reserving to himself all ecclesiastical rights, and requiring the payment of one penny, equal, it is said, to fifty cents of our present currency, for each house, to the Holy Roman See. In this famous document, Ireland is described in

terms by no means flattering to its condition as a country that had long enjoyed the light of the Gospel. Henry is authorized to enter it "to enlarge the borders of the church, to teach the truth of the Christian faith to the ignorant and rude ; to extirpate the nurseries of iniquity from the field of the Lord, and to reduce the people to obedience to laws." Sixteen years elapsed before the English monarch was able to cross the Channel, and to take possession of the kingdom which the Pope had thus very complacently handed over to him as a gift, and which has ever since remained subject to the English crown. In the meantime, however, circumstances arose which led to an earlier assertion of British power in the island. A quarrel arose between two of the petty Kings of the country, one of whom fled to England, imploring Henry's assistance and offering, as a reward for his services, to do him homage for his kingdom as its Sovereign Lord. The assistance sought was readily granted, especially as it furnished the English monarch with a plausible pretext for an invasion of Ireland. With his permission, and by his authority, a number of English barons, with their retainers, crossed over, restored the suppliant chieftain to his throne, and proceeded, under the authority of the Pope's warrant, to effect the subjugation of the island. The task was easy, because there was no united nation to oppose them. They never met in battle an army which represented Ireland, as the army which encountered William the Conqueror at the battle of Hastings represented England, or as the army which encountered Edward II. at the battle of Bannockburn represented Scotland. There was no national spirit to rally thousands and tens of thousands of brave men in heroic enthusiasm around a national standard, no national army, no national resistance. They even found in Irishmen themselves most willing allies in affecting the subjugation

of the country. Tribes that for ages had been arrayed in bitterest hostility against certain other tribes eagerly lent them their assistance. It is not with surprise, therefore, that we learn that, when Henry, not long after, attended by a strong military force, went over to claim the sovereignty of the Kingdom, he encountered scarcely a shadow of opposition. No combined national resistance was possible ; and one petty prince after another hastened to do him homage. Prendergast, in his "History of the Plantation of Ulster,"—an authority that will hardly be questioned—bears the following testimony :—"Now the Irish enemy," the native Irish population, "was no nation in the modern sense of the word, but a race divided into many nations or tribes, separately defending their lands from the English barons in their immediate neighbourhood. There had been no ancient national government displaced, no national dynasty overthrown. The Irish had no national flag, nor any capital city as the metropolis of their common country, nor any common administration of the law ; nor did they ever give a combined opposition to the English ; the English, coming in the name of the Pope, aided by the Irish bishops, and with a superior national organization which the Irish easily recognized, were accepted by the Irish. Neither King Henry II. or King John ever fought a battle in Ireland." During the five centuries that followed—from 1190 till 1688—the country, though nominally subject to the English Crown, continued in the same distracted and divided condition. Tribe continued to war against tribe. Mutual massacre and devastation was the one business of their lives. Sometimes an entire tribe was exterminated by another and its territory seized and occupied by the victors. The only area of comparative peace and security, was the Pale, including the four counties of Dublin, Kildare, Meath, and Louth, within which English law was more or less fitfully enforced.

England's conquest of Ireland has often been made the subject of the strongest condemnation by Irish writers and declaimers, but the real evil lay, not in the conquest itself, but in its incompleteness. No adequate means were taken to assert the authority of England and to enforce the supremacy of English law within the kingdom. The country, for the most part, was abandoned to the misrule and misery that were almost inseparable from the existence of a large number of petty chieftains who claimed independent sovereignty within their own territories, and who were often at war with one another. As soon as English power was firmly established in the whole island, a marked and beneficial change took place. Inter-tribal feuds and wars became impossible, and the kingdom began to emerge from the wild barbarism that had been its chronic condition for ages. The religion of the Reformation materially contributed to further the gratifying change, particularly in the northern section of the kingdom. Looking at the beneficial results that have already flowed from these agencies, we feel warranted in asserting that it is only in the firm maintenance of the British power, and in the wide diffusion of the Protestant faith throughout all its borders, that the complete emancipation of the country from the numerous ills that have darkened its history, and its elevation to a level in civilization with the other parts of the empire can be confidently anticipated. The era of the Protectorate, during which the supremacy of Britain was most vigorously enforced, was the era of its greatest prosperity, and those portions of it where Protestantism is the most widely prevalent are incomparably the most progressive. Its geographical position affords no uncertain indication that it should cultivate the closest alliance with the larger and more powerful island that, in some places, is removed only by a few miles from its eastern shores, and all the interests that can contribute to the pros-

perity and happiness of its people forbid the severance or weakening of the ties that link it with the British Crown. Its inhabitants may have been placed by an oppressive government at a serious disadvantage in the race for national progress in the past ; but all the grievances of which they may have had just reason to complain have either been already redressed, or are certain to be speedily redressed by the wiser and more beneficial legislation of these later and more enlightened days. The attention that is now readily given to Irish affairs in the Imperial Parliament, and the desire that evidently exists among Statesmen of all shades of politics to do all that legislation can effect to promote the progress and prosperity of the country, augur well for Ireland. It only remains that its inhabitants, remembering that legislation has its limits, will, forever abandoning the paths of lawless and disastrous agitation, and eagerly devoting themselves to the task of turning to the best account the numerous advantages that lie within their reach in the varied natural resources of their native land, honestly and diligently endeavour to elevate their country to a height of social enjoyment and national advancement that will bring it into line with the other and more prosperous portions of the Empire. One of their most admired national poets has well said :

“ How small, of all that human hearts endure,
That part which laws or kings can cause or cure,
Still to ourselves, in every place consigned,
Our own felicity we make or find.”

Not, however, till they shall have rid themselves of the yoke of the degrading superstition that still dominates the large majority of them, will their island home become in the words of another of their most admired national poets, “ Great, glorious, and free.”

CHAPTER II.

A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY OF IRELAND FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES.

Druidism first form of religion in Ireland—Christianity early introduced—Testimonies to this effect—Patrick, Ireland's great missionary—Life—Labours—Success—The church he founded—Its doctrines and polity—Not wholly Scriptural and primitive—Monasticism—Its peculiar character—Beneficial—Ireland a great centre of missionary operations—Distinguished missionaries—Columbkille—Columbanus, Gallus, Kilian, Fursey, and others—Came to be known as “The Isle of Saints”—The Church's decay—Causes—Struggle with Rome—Intervention of English power, and final overthrow.

THE early ecclesiastical history of Ireland is involved in obscurity hardly less impenetrable than the darkness that rests on its early civil history. Druidism, with its groves of oak, and sacred mistletoe, and huge altars of stone, and mysterious rites, was, so far as known, its earliest, and for ages, its only religion. The precise date, when the light of Christianity began to pierce the gloom of its pagan darkness, is unknown; but there is sufficient evidence to warrant the statement that this great event in its history occurred at an early period in our era. Eusebius, the well-known Ecclesiastical historian, who flourished in the fourth century, speaks of some of the Apostles having crossed the ocean to the British Isles to announce the glad tidings which their Master had bid them preach to every creature. In the days of Chrysostom, towards the end of the same century, “there were,” in his own words, “even in the British Isles that lie away in the open ocean worshippers of God in Christ, and students of Scripture.” In these statements, the phrase, “The British Isles,” is somewhat indefinite, but there is reason to regard

it as pointing to Ireland as much as to Britain, for, according to Tacitus, through the medium of trade Ireland was better known to strangers than Britain. In the Annals of the Four Masters, we are told that in the third century, Cormac, the chief king of Ireland, provoked the wrath of the Druids by turning from them “to the adoration of God.” We know that in the fourth century, Coelestius, one of the leading Christian controversialists of his day, and the intimate friend and companion of the celebrated Pelagius, was an Irishman. We know also that early in the following century, christianity must have made considerable progress in the Island, for Prosper, a Frenchman who flourished in this century, informs us in his Chronicon that, in 431, “Palladius, being ordained by Pope Celistine, is sent to the Irish believing in Christ as their first bishop.”

But whilst it is certain that Christianity found an early entrance into Ireland, winning converts from among the adherents of the Druidical superstition that had for ages reigned unchallenged in the island, no reliable record remains to testify to the names of the zealous missionaries by whose lips its divine message was first proclaimed, and by whose labours its gracious triumphs were first achieved. They died, and their names perished from off the face of the earth, but there is reason to believe that the light they enkindled was never wholly extinguished. As if confidently anticipating ultimate triumph, it ceased not the apparently hopeless struggle with the surrounding darkness until, in the fifth century, it happily won the anticipated triumph, and clothed the whole island with the splendour of its rays. This marked and marvellous advance in the history of its progress is mainly to be ascribed, under God, to the labours of Patrick, one of the most famous missionaries the Church has produced since the days of the Apostles, now universally recognized as the Apostle of Ireland.

Little is certainly known of the life of this celebrated missionary. So much that is manifestly legendary and mythical has been associated with his name by writers of the middle ages that several respectable authorities have not hesitated to question his existence. There can be no reasonable doubt, however, that he was a real personage, and that he laboured as a missionary in Ireland for many years in the fifth century, achieving extraordinary success, and eventually reducing the whole island to obedience to the faith. Three countries contend for the honour of his birth—Scotland, Wales, and France. From a piece of a brief autobiography, which is still extant and which is regarded as genuine by critics of all denominations, we learn that he was born in Armorical Gaul, perhaps at Boulogne-Sur-Mer; and that he was son of the deacon Calpurnius and grandson of the presbyter Potitus—facts which show that clerical celibacy was not then held to be of universal obligation. At an early age, he was twice carried captive into Ireland; but as often he managed to effect his escape. A short time after his second escape, and when he was about twenty-two or twenty-three years of age, he had a remarkable dream which left an indelible impression upon his mind and exerted a powerful influence upon the whole of his subsequent career. “I saw,” says he, “in a vision of the night, a man whose name was Victoricius coming as if from Ireland, with innumerable letters, one of which he handed to me, and I read the beginning of the letter, which ran thus: ‘The voice of the people of Ireland,’ and, while I was reading aloud the beginning of the letter, I thought at that very moment, I heard the voice of those who were in the Wood of Foclud,”—supposed to have been in Tirawley, County Mayo,—“which is by the Western Sea, and they cried out thus: ‘We entreat thee, holy youth, to come and walk still among us.’ And I was very much

pricked to the heart, and could read no more, and so awoke." As a child he had been instructed in the truth, but during his earlier years the knowledge he had acquired had proved of little practical value. It was not till adversity came that a vital change was effected. In the midst of the privations and suffering he endured during his captivity the Lord brought him to a sense of the unbelief of his heart. "I was from my childhood," he writes, "a believer in the only God; but I continued in doubt and unbelief till I was sorely chastened ; and, in truth, I have been humbled by hunger and nakedness, and it was my lot to traverse Ireland every day, sore against my will, until I was almost exhausted. But this proved rather a benefit to me, because by means of it I have been corrected by the Lord, and he has fitted me for being, at this day, what was once far from me, so that I should interest or concern myself about the salvation of others, when I used to have no such thoughts even for myself." Having become the subject of such a vital change, it seems only natural that he should accept the mysterious dream with which he had been visited as a divine intimation that he should become a missionary to Ireland. For the purpose of qualifying himself for the work to which he felt divinely called, he betook himself to the study of theology, first, as some allege, under the famous St. Martin, of Tours, who is reported to have been a near relative of his mother, and then, of Germanus, of Auxerre, making the Scriptures, for which all his life after he cherished the most profound reverence, the chief source of his instructions.

It has been stated again and again that the mission of Palladius, to which reference has already been made, having proved a failure, Pope Celestine ordained Patrick, and sent him to make another effort for the conversion of Ireland. But there is not the slightest trustworthy evidence to sustain the statement. In his Confession Patrick altogether ignores

any mission from Celestine. He never mentions either Rome or the Pope, or hints that he had any connection whatever with the ecclesiastical capital of Italy. It is also a significant circumstance that for nearly two hundred years after his alleged papal mission, no reference to it or its results, either by the Pope or any of his officials, is to be found in any of the numerous documents of the period that are still extant. This silence is unaccountable on the supposition that his mission to Ireland was by papal appointment, and that it was so eminently successful as to have resulted in the conversion of all Ireland to the faith, and in the establishment of a large and flourishing church that was ever after in close communion with the See of Rome. The truth is that Patrick, like Columbkille and Columbanus, and other missionaries of a later date, knew nothing of the Pope as an ecclesiastical superior, and gave himself little concern about receiving the sanction of his investiture, or that of any other ecclesiastical authority whatever. He held what he regarded as a divine commission to preach the gospel in Ireland, and that was enough for him. Having finished his theological studies, he set out for the country to which he felt drawn by a divine and irresistible impulse, arriving about the year 405, and continuing to prosecute his evangelistic labours with indomitable perseverance and extraordinary success till his death which, there are good reasons for believing, took place at Saul, near Downpatrick, County Down, on the 17th of March, 465.

As was to be expected, the devoted missionary encountered opposition from different quarters. Ancient superstitions, deeply rooted in the affections of a blind and bigoted people, and sanctioned by long usage and established authority, are not wont to surrender to a new faith without a struggle. On more than one occasion he was thrown into prison, and threatened with death. No difficulties or dangers, however,

could abate the ardour of his missionary zeal ; and the success that attended his earnest and persevering labours has never since been exceeded. “I am,” says he, “greatly a debtor to God, who has bestowed his grace so largely upon me, that multitudes should be born again to God through me ; and that of these, clergy should be every where ordained for a people lately coming to the faith. . . . The Irish, who never had the knowledge of God, and worshipped only idols and unclean things, have lately become the people of the Lord and are called the Sons of God.” It has been said that the success that attended the labours of this devoted and intrepid missionary was largely due to the miracles that he wrought. But all the miraculous achievements, often of the most ridiculous character, that have been imputed to him, are nothing more nor less than inventions of writers of the Middle ages. He himself made no pretensions to the working of miracles. He relied for success entirely on the simple preaching of the Word ; and it is worthy of record that in unfolding its doctrines, he seems never to have been at a loss for an answer to the objections which his rude and unenlightened auditors were naturally prompted to offer. It is stated that on one occasion, when preaching on the Trinity, one of those who heard him having stated that he could not see how three could be one, he stooped down, and, picking up a trefoil that grew at his feet, illustrated the doctrine by showing him the three leaves growing out of one stem—a circumstance which, it is said, led to the adoption of the shamrock as the national emblem of Ireland.

The failure of Palladius in his mission to Ireland is easily accounted for.

In the year 429, two French Bishops visited England for the purpose of assisting its orthodox clergy in suppressing the Pelagian heresy, which had begun to infest the church in South Britain. It is highly probable that during their

stay they heard of the great and successful work that Patrick was carrying on in the neighboring Island. At the time, there was a constant correspondence kept up between Italy and Gaul; and, shortly after their return home, the news of the great religious movement in Ireland must have reached the ears of the chief pastor of the Metropolis of Western Christendom. As the Roman Pontiff knew nothing of Patrick, and had just learned that there were already believers in Christ in Hibernia, he sent Palladius, as already stated, to be their first bishop. But the Romish emissary, on his arrival in the Western Isle, met with anything but a cordial reception. Patrick, whose labours had been prosecuted with great energy and perseverance for fully a quarter of a century previous, had already established a flourishing church of a more primitive and Apostolic order than the church at Rome, and was not prepared to surrender its government into the hands of a Romish ecclesiastic. So stoutly did he oppose the interference of the papal emissary, and so thoroughly at one with him in his opposition was the church that had sprung up under his ministrations that Palladius found it convenient to retire from the Irish shores, and to transfer his episcopal labours to North Britain, where, not long afterwards, he died of fever in what is now known as Kincardineshire. Thus began in the Irish church that decided resistance of Romish aggression that was vigorously and successfully maintained till the twelfth Century when the strong arm of English power enforced the supremacy of the papacy throughout the island. England's treatment of Ireland has not always been of the most friendly character, but unquestionably her great crime against the sister island has been thrusting popery on its church and people. "We are bound to remember," says Dr. Wordsworth, in his History of the Irish Church, "that in a great measure we owe our English Christianity to Ireland, and

alas ! we may not forget that Ireland owes her Romanism to us."

It is certain that the Church formed by Patrick in Ireland was neither Romish nor prelatic. In the free and commanded use of the Scriptures, the inculcation of the doctrines of grace and of the efficacy of the sacrifice and intercession of Christ, without the remotest allusion to any of the peculiar dogmas of Rome ; in the rejection of the Papal supremacy, the marriage of the clergy, and the Scriptural character of the bishops, each having charge of only one parish, and being aided in his labours by a plurality of presbyters or elders, it presented more of a resemblance to the Presbyterian model than to any other. And the same type that it assumed as it grew up under the ministrations of its famous founder, it continued to bear in all essential particulars until, after a hard struggle stretching over several centuries, it was eventually brought under the Romish yoke by the intervention of English power. Nennius, who is supposed to have flourished in the ninth century, affirms that Patrick founded in Ireland three hundred and sixty-five churches, and "consecrated the same number of bishops." Another earlier authority bears similar testimony. At the time Ireland did not probably contain more than from two to three hundred thousand inhabitants, so that these consecrated bishops could have been nothing more than *ordinary preachers*, charged with the spiritual oversight of parishes that severally could not have embraced on the average more than nine hundred people; a number which is far exceeded by multitudes of Presbyterian congregations in our own times. At a much latter date the Irish Church continued to exhibit the same primitive and Scriptural polity. Aengus, the Culdee, writing in the ninth century, was able to enumerate no less than 141 places in the island, in each of which there were, or had been, seven contemporary bishops ; a fact

which makes it clear that as Patrick had proceeded on the principle that wherever a congregation could be collected, a bishop should be appointed to its spiritual oversight, the same arrangement continued in existence for centuries afterward.

It was natural that the Church founded by Patrick in Ireland should in its principles and polity be of the type described. It was the type of the Church of the New Testament ; it was, moreover, the type of the Church of Brittany, the land of his birth ; and it is reasonable to expect that he should transfer to Ireland a system of polity and worship that commended itself to his approval by such powerful considerations. We are not to suppose, however, that the Church he founded was in all respects conformed to the Scriptural model. When he began his evangelistic labours, four centuries had passed over the Christian Church, bringing with them in their course a considerable departure in many quarters from the arrangements of the days of the Apostles. The Church in Brittany had not altogether escaped the prevailing errors of the times, and we are not to suppose that the great missionary planted in Hibernia a better form of Christianity than that in which he had been educated. As the fifth century opened, a strong liking for the monastic system which had long before been incorporated into the polity of the Eastern Churches spread throughout the West with great rapidity. There is reason to believe that Patrick carried with him to Ireland an ardent admiration for the popular innovation ; and that, finding that a kindred system was already in full operation in the pagan worship that prevailed in the island, he was all the more inclined to give it a place in the Church that he founded. There was one important feature, however, which distinguished the monasteries he established from institutions of the same name to be found elsewhere. They were essentially

schools for the education of the people, and more particularly seminaries for the training of ministers of the Word. As such, they were eminently beneficial, and contributed very largely to the knowledge of the truth and the spread of the Gospel. From their cloisters there went forth, thoroughly equipped for their work, not a few of the most noted missionaries of later times, by whom the light of the Gospel was diffused not only throughout Britain but also throughout large sections of Europe. Of these missionaries Columbkille and Columbanus were the most noted.

Columbkille was born at Gartan, County Donegal, in 521, and is known as the Apostle of the Northern Picts, who peopled the western region of the Highlands of Scotland. In the forty-second year of his age, attended by twelve companions, he passed over to Hy or Iona, a small island on the western coast of the country that was to be the scene of his future labours, where he established an institute which long enjoyed the highest celebrity as a school of the prophets, and from which there went forth a succession of able and devoted missionaries by whom the torch of divine truth was carried not only throughout a large part of Britain, but also throughout not a few of the dark places of the continent. “When Justin, the younger, the successor of Justinian, had the government of the Roman empire, there came into Britain,” says Bede, “a famous presbyter and abbot, a monk by habit and life whose name was Columba, to preach the word of God to the provinces of the northern Picts, who are separated from the southern parts by steep and rugged mountains. . . . Columba came into Britain in the ninth year of the reign of Bridius, who was the son of Meilochon, and the powerful king of the Pictish nation; and he converted that nation to the faith of Christ by his preaching and example—whereupon he also received from them the island (Iona) for a monastery; for it is not very large, but contains about five

families, according to the English computation. His successors hold the island to this day ; he was also buried therein, having died at the age of seventy-seven, about thirty-two years after he came into Britain to preach. . . That island has for its ruler an abbot, who is a presbyter, to whose jurisdiction all the province, and even the bishops, according to an unusual arrangement, are subject, after the example of the first teacher who was not a bishop but a presbyter and monk, of whose life and discourses some writings are said to be preserved by his disciples." It is evident from this clear and explicit statement of the venerable Bede, that episcopacy was unknown in the ecclesiastical system established by Columbkille, and it is certain that the planting of Christianity in a large part of Britain is to be ascribed to the labours of presbyters who never received the imposition of episcopal hands. It is to presbytery therefore, and not to episcopacy that we are to look for the early ecclesiastical ancestry of the present churches of North and South Britain.

Columbanus, the other distinguished missionary to whom we have referred, was the disciple of Comghall, Abbot of Bangor, County Down, who, as a teacher, had acquired wide celebrity, and whose monastic establishment is said to have contained at one time several thousand students. In 589, when somewhat advanced in life, he was seized with an irrepressible desire to preach the gospel to the heathen. Setting out like Columbkille with twelve companions, he at first passed over into South Britain. From thence he made his way successively to France, Switzerland, and Italy. In all these lands he laboured with great zeal and faithfulness, and did much to disseminate the knowledge of the truth among their pagan and idolatrous inhabitants. Of the twelve companions who accompanied him to the continent, the best known is Gallus, who laboured chiefly in Switzer-

land, one of the cantons of which still perpetuates his name, and whose labours were so eminently successful that he has been called by some the Apostle of Switzerland.

About this time Kilian, Fursey, Livin, Fridolin, and many other Irishmen won honourable distinction in the field of missionary enterprise. Without attempting a narrative of their labours, it may suffice to state that all these eminent and successful heralds of the cross were thoroughly instructed in the knowledge of the Scriptures, and that their love of Bible truth was the parent of their evangelistic zeal. The religion that they laboured to disseminate was essentially the same Scriptural faith that is enshrined in the standards and preached in the pulpits of our protestant churches at this hour. There is a wide interval of many centuries between their days and ours ; but as the same sun that shone upon them shines upon us, the same faith that irradiated their darkness enlightens ours, giving to them even as it gives to us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. It may also be stated that from this time and onward till the close of the eight century, Ireland occupied the foremost place among European nations as a seat of learning and piety. The condition of the country was favourable to the cultivation of literature and religion. “Though by no means free from domestic feuds, it was, as compared with other lands, in the enjoyment of quiet and prosperity. When England was conquered by the Saxons, and when the West of Europe was invaded by the Northern barbarians, it remained free from foreign aggression.” The fame and eminence of the seminaries of learning in which it abounded, attracted students to its shores from all quarters, and the hosts of able and accomplished scholars and zealous missionaries that went forth from these institutions to fill positions of prominence and influence in those lands in which Christianity was already established, and to convey the knowledge of it to those lands in

which it was wholly unknown, gave it a just claim to the designation, "Isle of Saints," by which, from the seventh century and onwards, it was generally known. We greatly mistake, however, if we imagine that this designation furnishes a correct idea of the general character of its population. The country still retained traces of its earlier barbarism. The people for the most part were but ill instructed in the knowledge of the truth, and many of them, in their habits and practices, still continued to walk in the ways of their pagan ancestors. The petty kings were frequently engaged in bitter hostilities, and in war both sexes marched to the battle field. Even the monastic establishments often exhibited a sad lack of the spirit of the gospel. Like the petty kingdoms that surrounded them, they were not unfrequently at variance with one another, and when a quarrel arose, the brethren did not hesitate to don the warrior's garb and to decide the contest on the battlefield. Nor need such things greatly surprise us. A country is not lifted out of barbarism in a day. The wilderness is not made all at once to blossom as the rose. Time is required for the growth of the virtues that Christianity enjoins and fosters. Even ages may pass away before they reach their full development in a land that the gospel has rescued from a long reign of pagan superstition. Had the Church founded by Patrick in Ireland been left free to do its appropriate work, unhindered by Romish aggressions on the one hand, or by Barbarian ravages on the other, the country must have ultimately responded to the quickening and elevating power of its ministrations, and risen to a height of moral excellence and material prosperity that would have justified the glowing representations of its alleged ancient greatness in which some writers of its history have not hesitated to indulge.

From the fifth Century and onwards to the close of the eighth, the Irish Church enjoyed a large measure of prosperity.

It was eminently a living and evangelical church, and the work that it did, during the long interval, in evangelizing Britain and large portions of the Continent, through the agency of the able and accomplished missionaries that went forth from its communion, must ever be regarded as the brightest jewel in the crown of its glory. But as the ninth century opened, the sun of its prosperity began to decline, and, ere the twelfth had run its course, had gone down in darkness. Various causes contributed to this unhappy result, the more important of which claim a brief notice.

Though the Irish Church was essentially Scriptural in its doctrines and worship from the commencement of its history, a Romanizing tendency began to manifest itself at a comparatively early period within its communion. This tendency was considerably strengthened by an event that took place just as the sixth century was hastening to its close.

Christianity was introduced into South Britain at a very early period, and during the third and fourth centuries the church in that land was large and flourishing. But in the middle of the fifth century it experienced a serious reverse. When the Pagan Saxons invaded the country they waged a war of extermination against all who bore the Christian name, and the remnant who escaped their fury sought refuge in Wales. In 597, the same year in which Columbkille died, the monk Augustine, accompanied by forty companions, arrived in England, deputed by Pope Gregory the Great to attempt the conversion of the Pagan invaders who had then taken possession of the country. These Italian missionaries were not long in England until they came into collision with the British clergy. They attempted to reduce the native Church to a full conformity to the Romish model, but the British ecclesiastics were not disposed tamely to bow their necks to the Romish yoke. They had received their Christianity from a purer source

than Rome, and, instead of submitting readily to the dictates of the papal delegation, rejected them with indignant disdain. So decided were they in their opposition, that they even refused, says one who was then an adherent of the Romish party, "to join prayers with us in the church, or to sit at meat at the same table with us in the kindly intercourse of society." Shortly after their arrival in England, these Romish emissaries turned their attention to Ireland also, but the Irish clergy, following the example of their brethren in South Britain, repelled their advances, and refused to hold communion with them. Their interference, however, was not altogether fruitless. It did much to encourage the Romanizing party, who, after a long and arduous struggle, in the course of which the country was often involved in civil war and bloodshed, finally succeeded in reducing the Irish Church to subjection to the See of Rome. In the early part of the twelfth century, the struggle assumed a more definite and determined character. In 1,110, a memorable Synod was held at Rathbreasail, at which Gillebert, the most zealous Irish advocate of Romanism, and the *first* apostolic legate ever appointed in Ireland, presided. This synod inaugurated a complete revolution in the policy of the Irish church. Hitherto, the parochial bishops, who were simply pastors of congregations, had enjoyed the independence of Presbyterian parity; but by a decree of this Synod they were placed under the government of twenty-three bishops and two archbishops. It was not to be expected that a decree of so revolutionary a character would meet with general acceptance. More than forty years after it was promulgated, it was found to be very imperfectly obeyed. Multitudes of "parochial bishoprics" still existed. In order to complete the work that the Synod of Rathbreasail had begun, another Synod was held in March, 1152, at Kells, County Mayo, under the presi-

dency of Cardinal Paparo, the papal legate. At this Synod, the scheme of episcopal distribution adopted at the former Synod was enlarged, and no less than thirty-eight dioceses were now constituted. But this arrangement met with just as little acceptance as the former. It is certain that sixty-four years afterwards, it was little more than a dead letter. The work, however, on which Rome had set her heart, and for the accomplishment of which she had long and keenly struggled, was now on the eve of successful execution. Ireland, by the gift of the Pope, became an appanage of the English Crown, and, by the strong arm of the English power, the Irish Church was forcibly deprived of her ancient purity and independence, and compelled to yield obedience to the Papal Supremacy.

Another cause that materially contributed to effect the decadence and overthrow of the ancient Irish Church was the frequent irruptions into the country of freebooters from Denmark and Norway, which began as the eighth century was drawing to a close, and were continued throughout the two following centuries, and until they were effectually checked by the memorable battle of Clontarf, under the celebrated Brian Boru, in the year 1,014. These long-continued incursions were conducted with great barbarity. The country was laid waste far and wide, the churches and monasteries were pillaged and destroyed, multitudes of the clergy were murdered, and the people who escaped the general devastation reduced to degrading servitude. Had Ireland been united under one Sovereign, able to rally around him, at such a crisis, a loyal and patriotic people, it could easily have hurled the invaders from its shores. But it was so weakened by internal divisions, and distracted by domestic feuds, that it was incapable of offering a combined resistance to the daring adventurers. Some even of the petty potentates of the island were base

enough, yielding to the promptings of selfish ambition, to unite with the invaders, and to aid them in their work of devastation and plunder. Under such circumstances, we are not surprised to learn that, in process of time, the country was reduced to a condition of barbarism, and that the Church, sadly disabled in all the arms of her strength, became a readier prey to the inroads of superstition. When the English conquest followed in the twelfth century, and Romanism was forced upon the Irish people by the strong arm of the English power, the decadence of the church became more marked and accelerated. The glory of the days was gone, when swarms of accomplished scholars and devoted missionaries went forth from the Irish shores to build up and to propagate the truth in many lands. Bishops and archbishops were not ashamed to live in open adultery. The monks and inferior clergy became notorious for the most scandalous profligacy. Learning was reduced to a very low ebb, and the spirit of true religion almost wholly disappeared. The people of all ranks and classes sank into the grossest ignorance and superstition. The island, to which the designation "Isle of Saints" had been accorded for ages, was turned into one of the vilest dens of iniquity in Christendom, and the misery and wretchedness that have never since abandoned its shores became as widespread as the hovels that dotted its surface and sheltered its degraded and demoralized population. Such was the lamentable condition to which the enforced acceptance of Romanism speedily reduced the Irish Church and the Irish people. And such was the deplorable state in which the Reformation found both alike when it first claimed their attention. As we contemplate the dark and distressing picture, and remember that it still continues to furnish no inadequate representation of the temporal and spiritual condition of the great majority of the Irish people, we are cheered

by the assurance that the light of a better day shall yet dawn upon the island, rolling away for ever the darkness that has long overshadowed its hills and vales, expelling from all its borders the numberless calamities that for ages have made it a by-word among the nations of the earth, and diffusing among the thousands and tens of thousands of its population the varied priceless blessings that flow with unerring certainty from the general and cordial reception of the truth.

CHAPTER III.

THE REFORMATION—IN IRELAND.

The Irish devoted to the Papacy—Unfavourable circumstances attending the introduction of the Reformation—Quarrel of Henry VIII. with the Pope—Overthrow of the Pope's supremacy in England—in Ireland—The Reformation in the reign of Edward VI.—of Mary—of Elizabeth—Measures for its promotion in Elizabeth's reign—Opposition from Rome—Papal bulls—The Jesuits in Ireland—Rebellion renewed again and again—Its consequences—Wretched state of the country—The memory of Elizabeth unjustly aspersed.

HOUGH the Irish Church was the last of the National Churches of the West to surrender its independence and submit to the supremacy of the Pope, it has since clung to the servitude it was ultimately compelled to accept with remarkable tenacity. For centuries, Irish Romanists have been the most ardent supporters the Papacy could number among the millions of its adherents, as well as the most persistent opponents of evangelical truth. Unhappily the Reformation, when it first challenged their acceptance, came to them in circumstances that were ill-fitted to win for it a favourable hearing. It came to them as an exotic, transplanted to their shores by a Government they had long been accustomed to regard with dislike, associated with the hated domination of foreigners. No Reformer arose from among themselves, like Luther in Germany or Knox in Scotland, to instruct them in its principles, or to lead them to an intelligent reception of its message. It was presented to them, not in the fullness of its own divine excellence, but in a diluted condition, and by persons whose character, in many instances at least, was little likely to command their respect. It was urged upon their acceptance, not by patient teaching and kindly persua-

sion, but by royal authority, enforced by pains and penalties that necessarily associated it in their minds with an oppressive tyranny. It found them sunk in the grossest ignorance and superstition, utterly destitute of a spirit of enquiry, and content to yield the most abject subjection to a priesthood hardly less ignorant and degraded than themselves. It also encountered serious hindrances to its reception in the disturbed state of the country, its limited commercial intercourse, and its want of schools and colleges, and of books printed in the language of the people. Yet, unfavourable as the conditions were that surrounded its early introduction into the island, had suitable measures been employed to impart to the people the knowledge of its principles ; had the Scriptures, printed in their own language, been put into their hands ; had persons “instructed into the Kingdom of Heaven,” “able ministers of the New Testament,” capable of declaring to them in their own tongue the wonderful works of God, been appointed, as speedily as possible and in adequate supply, to labour among them in word and doctrine, Ireland would probably have been to-day as largely Protestant as either England or Scotland. Ignorant and superstitious as the people were, in spite of their priesthood, who opposed with vehemence, and often with violence, the dissemination of the truth among them, they evinced on several notable occasions no little interest in the new learning by a remarkable eagerness to possess themselves of copies of the Scriptures, and to be made acquainted with their contents. And, in every instance in which able, earnest, evangelical ministers were appointed to labour among them, such as Bale of Ossory, they manifested marked readiness to give heed to its claims, and not a few of them cordially embraced its principles and became earnest in its profession and zealous in its propagation.

The Papal supremacy in England was always distasteful

to a portion of the people, and on more than one occasion their sovereigns manifested a very decided disposition to cast it off as an intolerable burden. With strict historical accuracy, Shakespeare, in one of his plays, represents King John as sending a message to Pope Innocent III. that—

. “No Italian priest
Shall tithe or toll in our dominions ;
But as we, under heaven, are supreme head,
So under Him, that Great Supremacy,
Where we do reign we will alone uphold,
Without the assistance of a mortal hand.
So tell the Pope, all reverence set apart
To him and his usurped authority.”

But the power of the priesthood, whose interests lay in maintaining the servitude, was too strong even for them, and all their efforts for its abolition only resulted in humiliating defeat. At length Henry VIII. succeeded in throwing off the hated yoke, transferring to himself the ecclesiastical authority the Pope had exercised for centuries.

Henry was crowned king in 1509, being at the time in the eighteenth year of his age. In 1521, when the Reformation was thrilling all Germany, he entered the lists as an antagonist of “Martin Luther, the heresiarch,” and in return for his polemical book upon the Sacraments, was honoured by Leo X. with the title of “Defender of the Faith.” Little did either of them imagine that the same hand that had so valorously supported the Papal cause would, ere long, deal it one of the heaviest blows it had ever received.

Prince Arthur, the eldest son of Henry VII., was married Nov. 14, 1501, to Catherine, daughter of Ferdinand, King of Spain. The Prince, however, died in the following April, and his thrifty father, unwilling to restore the dowry of so great an heiress, conceived the idea of uniting the young widow in marriage with his other son, the future

Henry VIII. Marriage with a deceased brother's wife being contrary to the canon law, he procured a bull of dispensation from Pope Julius II., and the nuptials were duly solemnized shortly after the accession of the royal bridegroom to the throne of his ancestors. In process of time several children were born to the wedded pair, but they all died in infancy, with the exception of Mary, who lived to become Queen in future years. It is said that the King began at an early period to entertain scruples regarding the lawfulness of his marriage, and that the death of his children awoke within his mind a superstitious feeling that his scruples had received divine confirmation. Dissatisfied with his position, and in the hope of obtaining immediate relief, he made his scruples known to the Pontiff, who, doubtless, would have at once acceded to his wishes and granted him a divorce, had he not been restrained by the fear of giving offence to Charles V., Emperor of Germany, the most powerful potentate of his time, and nephew of the woman whose honour and interests were at stake. The negotiations that followed, and that were carried on for years, need no further reference. On one pretext or another the Pope managed to delay the decision. By the advice of Cranmer Henry consulted the universities at home and on the Continent, and obtained from not a few of the best canonists in Europe a judgment in his favour. Fortified by this decision, and exasperated by the temporizing policy of the Court of Rome, he broke with the Papacy altogether, and by royal edict issued on the 9th of June, 1534, declared the Pope's authority at an end in his dominions. Parliament, which by several previous Acts, had greatly curtailed the Papal supremacy, now abolished it altogether, and, by public statute, ordered "That the King, our Sovereign Lord, his heirs and successors, Kings of these realms, shall be taken, accepted, and reputed the only supreme head on earth of

the Church of England, called the “*Anglicana Ecclesia*.” This was followed by other measures which greatly diminished the ecclesiastical power, and powerfully drew the higher classes to the support of the policy of the King. The monasteries were suppressed, the mitred abbots removed from the Upper House, and their lands divided among the nobility and gentry.

Thus, the kingdom of England was severed from the Papacy. The separation, however, was little more than political. Romanism was still the national creed. The King himself continued to the end of his days to hold firmly by almost all its superstitions. Meanwhile, however, evangelical religion was making steady progress among the people, and ere the century had completed its course had reached an ascendancy which it has never since lost, and which, we hope, it will never cease to retain.

After Henry had consummated his quarrel with the Pope by publicly renouncing his supremacy, he lost no time in enforcing his own ecclesiastical authority in every part of his dominions. In 1535, he sent commissioners to Ireland to proclaim the royal supremacy and to demand the submission of the prelates. Of the agents whom he employed on this important errand, the most active was George Brown, who had been provincial of the Augustinian order in England, and who was consecrated Archbishop of Dublin in March of the same year. On his arrival in Dublin the royal commissioner summoned a meeting of the principal clergy and nobility of the kingdom, and laid before them his instructions. Nothing, however, was accomplished. The clergy, headed by Archbishop Cromer of Armagh, refused compliance with the royal mandates, and for nearly a year no further effort was made to secure submission. But in May of the year following, a meeting of Parliament was held at which the royal wishes found the fullest recognition in

several stringent enactments by which the King was declared the supreme head of the Church on earth, the authority of the Pope was solemnly renounced, the supporters of the Papacy were declared guilty of high treason, all appeals to Rome were strictly forbidden, several religious houses were dissolved, and all persons who should slander the King, or, on account of these innovations, style him usurper or tyrant, were made subject to severe penalties. But though the royal supremacy was thus publicly acknowledged and declared, little was done to promote the religious reformation of the country. It is true, Archbishop Brown, at the express command of Lord Cromwell, the King's favourite Minister in England, ordered images and reliques, that had so largely ministered to superstition, to be removed from the churches. He also published for the use of the clergy a form of prayer in English, containing petitions for the Catholic Church, the King, and some others, which were to be taught to the people. Translations into English of the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments besides were put into circulation. Yet, so little was done that was really fitted to promote the spiritual instruction of the people that it is doubtful if, when the King died, there was even one intelligent professor of the Reformed faith in all Ulster, Connaught or Munster.

During the reign of Edward VI., the Reformation made rapid strides in England, but hardly any real advancement was perceptible in Ireland. A new Primate, Dowdall, who had been appointed in 1543, was secretly devoted to the Papacy and adverse to all changes both in dogma and in ritual. His influence, it is true, was somewhat counteracted by the efforts of Archbishop Brown, at whose suggestion a royal proclamation was issued requiring the English Common Prayer Book to be used throughout the kingdom in the celebration of Divine worship. One section of the bishops

acquiesced in this arrangement, and the new service was accordingly celebrated for the first time in "Christ Church" Cathedral, Dublin, on the Easter Sunday of 1551. In the same year, instructions were given for rendering the whole Prayer Book into Irish, but unhappily these instructions were not carried out.

Though by such means the Reformation was publicly recognised and outward conformity to the Established worship enforced, the great majority, both of the clergy and people, still adhered to the tenets and practices of the Church of Rome. Accordingly, when Mary, who was a bigoted Romanist, ascended the throne, they immediately openly returned to the Romish ritual. The Papal supremacy was re-established ; the prelates who favoured the Reformation were ejected from their sees, whilst those—the great majority—who complied with the new order of things were left undisturbed in their positions. The persecutions of the Protestants of England in this reign, which earned for this feeble-minded and fanatical queen the infamous designation of "Bloody Mary," form one of the darkest and saddest chapters in the history of South Britain. Strange to say, Ireland escaped the exterminating fury of the bigoted and merciless sovereign. The number of Protestants appears to have been too few and insignificant to provoke any apprehensions for the security of the Romish faith in this favoured "island of saints." Ireland, therefore, became an asylum for the persecuted Protestants of England, who, being well instructed in Christian truth and zealous in its propagation, did more during their sojourn to promote the cause of the Reformation in the island than had hitherto been accomplished by all the royal proclamations and other authoritative measures that had been put into operation. It was soon made manifest, however, that the safety they enjoyed would not be of long continuance. In May, 1556, Viscount Fitz-

walter entered on his duties as Viceroy, and the instructions he received from his royal Mistress in relation to religion supplied no uncertain indication of her purpose to root Protestantism out of the country. The Lord-Deputy and his Council were required "by their example and all good means possible to advance the honour of God and the Catholic faith ; to set forth the honour and dignity of the Pope's Holiness and See Apostolic of Rome ; and from time to time to be ready, with their aid and secular force, at the request of all spiritual ministers and ordinaries, *to punish and repress all heretics and Lollards, and their damnable sects, opinions, and errors.*" The Irish Parliament met in June of the same year, and among the Acts that it passed was one providing for the punishment of heretics. It revived three statutes made in the reigns of Richard II., Henry IV., and Henry V., which declared that "all persons preaching or teaching, or evidently suspected of preaching or teaching, against the Catholic faith" might be arrested by the diocesan, tried at his discretion, and, refusing to abjure or relapsing, delivered to the secular army and *burnt for the terror of others.* Though the royal intentions were thus sufficiently made manifest, it does not appear that anyone in Ireland suffered for religion during the five years that Mary sat upon the throne. There can hardly be a doubt, however, that had her reign extended only a short period beyond the limits of its actual duration the same bloody scenes that darkened the history of England would have been re-enacted on Irish soil. Shortly before her death she issued a commission to the Viceroy at Dublin to proceed with vigour in the detection and punishment of Protestants within his jurisdiction ; but before the commission reached the hands of her Majesty's representative the Queen was no more, and a Protestant Sovereign had taken her place on the throne.

The accession of Elizabeth was an event fraught with con-

sequences to the Reformation that it would be difficult to overestimate. It put an end to the persecutions that had swept over England with ruthless severity during the previous reign. It lent such encouragement to the friends of the new learning that through their zealous exertions, evangelical truth speedily attained to the ascendancy over the national conscience that it retains at this hour. It arrayed the whole power of England on the side of the Reformation at a time when it peculiarly needed the shelter of a strong and friendly arm. It opened up an asylum to which Protestants, driven by persecution from other lands, could flee for refuge. Had the new Sovereign been, like her sister Mary, a blind and bigoted Romanist, in whose bosom an intense fanaticism had extinguished every sentiment of humanity, and in whose purposes lay imbedded a fixed determination to restore the Papacy to its former supremacy within the kingdom, the whole history of the Reformation, as well as of England itself, would have borne a very different complexion. Protestantism, with all the great Powers of Europe combined for its extinction, would have been almost certainly crushed out of existence ; and the English nation, deprived of the quickening impulse that the Reformation imparted to all its most vital interests, would have remained at a long distance from the greatness that now gives to the British Empire the foremost place among the nations of the earth.

The accession of Elizabeth was eminently favourable to the interests of the Reformation in Ireland, as well as in England. Protestantism was restored as the national and established religion of the country ; the outward symbols of Romanism were abolished ; the use of the Common Prayer Book was enforced, and the people obliged to attend the public services of the National Church. Early in 1567, a creed was also provided for the new Establishment, entitled "A Brief Declaration of Certain Principal Articles of

Religion." These articles were twelve in number, and were the same as were adopted in England in the beginning of this reign. They set forth the leading doctrines of Christianity, recognise the royal supremacy, and protest against the mass as a propitiatory sacrifice. For nearly half a century they continued to be the acknowledged creed of the Irish Church.

The same fatal error, however, that had hitherto marked the history of the Reformation in Ireland, was renewed. Little was aimed at beyond outward conformity to the established ritual. No adequate effort was made to enlist the intelligence of the people on the side of the truth. It was an essential principle of the Reformation that Divine service should be conducted in the language of the worshippers. But, in the case of Ireland, this common sense principle was shamefully neglected. Though the great mass of the people knew no language but their native Irish, in the desire to Anglicize the country, it was enacted that Divine service should be conducted in the English language, and that where the officiating clergyman did not understand English the Latin tongue should be used. For the regular celebration of Divine worship, even after this fashion, no suitable provision was made. Several of the sees were allowed to remain vacant, and multitudes of the parishes shared a similar fate. Many of the churches were allowed to sink into utter ruin, and when, after a long lapse of years, incumbents were appointed, were found to be unfit for use. Unhappily, the incumbents that were appointed were, in very many instances, grossly unfit for their sacred functions. The Poet Spencer, speaking from personal observation, describes them in these terms :—" Ye may find gross sinning, greedy covetousness, fleshy incontinence, careless sloth, and generally all disordered life in the common clergyman — they neither read the Scriptures, nor preach to the people, nor administer the

Communion. But Baptism they do, for they christen, yet after the Popish fashion."

It is pleasant, whilst noticing the feebleness and futility of the efforts to evangelize Ireland, that were made during the earlier days of the Reformation, to record one or more notable exceptions.

As the sixteenth century was drawing to a close, Trinity College was established at Dublin, mainly for the purpose of supplying well-trained pastors to the National Church. As early as 1569 a project had been set on foot for the erection of such an institution, but it was not till 1593 that it took practical shape. It was built on the site of the old Monastery of All-Hallows, on a plot of ground called Hoggin Green, and the funds necessary for its erection were raised by public subscription. The foundation stone was laid on March 13, 1592, and it was noted as a curious and auspicious circumstance that in a climate noted for its humidity, not a shower of rain fell by day to retard its erection till the building was completed. On January 9, 1593, it was formally opened for the reception of students, of whom one of the earliest enrolled was James Ussher, afterwards Archbishop of Armagh, famous as a theologian and antiquarian, and uncle of the more celebrated primate of the same name. Happily, it was founded on a liberal basis. Its doors were open to all classes of the Irish people. Walter Travers, an eminent Presbyterian minister, was the first regular provost, and two of the first fellows, James Fullerton and James Hamilton, were of the same creed. The former was afterwards knighted and the latter was subsequently raised to the peerage under the title of Lord Claneboy, and became the founder of the family of which the present Marquis of Dufferin and Ava, better known as Lord Dufferin, is the representative. In 1598, Travers retired from the office of provost, and, in 1601, Henry

Alvey, a man of the same religious principles, was chosen to fill the vacancy. The distinction between Conformist and Noncomformist, which had been already carried to so great an extent in England was, at this period, unknown in Ireland. Conformity in all respects to the Established ritual was not pressed upon the Irish Protestant clergy. Ministers of all the Reformed Churches possessed of learning and zeal were eligible to appointments, and this wise and judicious arrangement continued in operation till the time of the infamous Laud, in the ill-starred reign of Charles I., when absolute and entire conformity was rigorously enforced. Under the operations of this charitable comprehension, the Protestant Church attained to a measure of progress that otherwise would have been impossible.

It is pleasant, also, to record that the education of the people generally was not altogether overlooked. By an Act of Parliament passed in 1569 schools were ordered to be erected in the principal town of every diocese, under the direction of English schoolmasters, of whose salary one-third was to be paid by the bishop, and the remainder by his clergy. Had this measure been faithfully carried out it would have done much to improve the condition of the peasantry and to promote all the material and moral interests of the country ; but unhappily, like Irish reforms generally, it was allowed to sink into abeyance.

Shortly after the passing of this Act an attempt was made to enlighten the people and to diffuse the knowledge of the truth among them through the medium of their own language. Nicholas Walsh, chancellor of St. Patrick's, Dublin, and John Kearney, treasurer of the same cathedral, introduced into Dublin Irish types and a printing press, furnished at the expense of Queen Elizabeth, and obtained an order from the Government for printing the Liturgy in the native tongue, and for setting apart, in every principal

town, a church for conducting Divine service in the Irish language. The want of an adequate supply of qualified teachers robbed this eminently judicious scheme of much of its efficiency, yet it is said that, so far as it was put into operation, it was singularly successful in furthering the progress of the Reformation among the natives.

It is not to be supposed that the change in the national faith in Ireland, introduced and enforced by royal authority, awoke no public resistance. Even in King Henry's time, when little more was attempted than the abolition of the Papal supremacy, the machinations of the Papacy resulted in open rebellion. As soon as the Pope was made aware of the attempt to overthrow his authority in Ireland he despatched instructions to Cromer, Archbishop of Armagh, and his clergy, requiring them to put forth the most strenuous exertions for the maintenance of the Papal jurisdiction. By a Bull, framed in 1535, but not published till 1538, Pope Paul III. excommunicated the offending Sovereign, declared him dethroned, dissolved all leagues between him and other Catholic princes, and consigned him to *eternal damnation*. An agent also was sent to Ireland to stir up the native chiefs against Henry's government. The Papal emissary, aided by the active zeal of the priesthood, ever foremost in fomenting rebellion against the English rule, found little difficulty in accomplishing his mission. A confederacy was formed, under the leadership of O'Neil, the most powerful of the northern chieftains, and a desperate attempt made to restore the Papal supremacy and cast off the hated yoke of Britain. But the attempt, like all similar attempts before and since, ended in disaster. Lord Leonard Grey, the Viceroy, with a large body of troops under his command, met the insurgents at a place called Bellahoe, on the borders of Meath, and gave them a signal overthrow. Shortly after, encouraged by the addition to their ranks of Murrough

O'Brien, Prince of Thomond, they renewed the attempt, but with still less success. Awed by such prompt and decisive assertions of British power, all the chieftains of any consideration, as well as the clergy in all places where English rule was supreme, acknowledged the royal supremacy and submitted quietly to the ecclesiastical revolution.

This submission, however, which at the time appeared to be cordial and general, was not of long continuance. An era of insubordination and rebellion commenced soon after that can hardly be said even yet to have come to a close. The cause of the change is not far to seek.

In 1540 the Jesuit Society, instituted by Ignatius Loyola, for the purpose of stemming the progress of the Reformation, received the sanction of the Pope. In the following year two of the leaders of the new organization—John Codure and Alphonsus Salmon—were appointed to visit Ireland. Almost from that fatal hour the western isle has been the constant scene of the Society's baneful operations, presenting, in consequence, the melancholy spectacle of a land rent by dissension and strife, overrun by turbulence and disorder, deluged with anarchy and crime, sedition and murder, sunk in ignorance and poverty. For a time the machinations of the Jesuit emissaries bore little fruit. The Irish chiefs had not yet forgotten the lessons that recent defeats had impressively taught them, and were in no humour to listen to disloyal counsels. The Jesuits, however, were not idle. If rebellion were found to be impracticable in the meantime, other means could be employed to promote the object it was their mission to accomplish. Moving about stealthily from place to place, they constantly traversed the country, holding meetings, defending the peculiarities of Romanism, misrepresenting the doctrines of the Reformation and vilifying the character of

its most prominent supporters, stirring up discontent among the people, and inflaming their minds with hatred of the British rule. At length they succeeded in inducing Shane O'Nell, the most powerful dynast of the North, to rise in arms against the Government, and for years Ulster was overrun by the flames of a civil war, which, when it was finally terminated, left a large part of the province almost without an inhabitant. In 1567 this daring disturber of the public peace was killed at Cushendun, in a drunken carousal, by the Macdonnells, and two years afterwards the Irish Parliament passed an Act for the attainder of himself and his associates in rebellion. Thus more than the one-half of Ulster became vested in the Crown, and the way to some extent prepared for the colonization of this province, which took place in the following reign.

But defeat was insufficient to turn aside the Jesuits from the prosecution of their aim. Baffled in the attempt to wrest Ireland from the grasp of England, and to restore the supremacy of the Pope in the island by the force of arms, they had recourse to the spiritual artillery of the Vatican, which, in days of yore, had often been found to be irresistible, and procured from the Pope a decree of excommunication against Elizabeth.

When Elizabeth became Queen, it was hoped that she would lend her support to Romanism, and, though from the outset she manifested strong Protestant leanings, the hope was not abandoned. With the view of inducing her to return to his fold, Pope Pius IV., in May 1560, sent her a letter in which he addressed her as his "dearest daughter in Christ," and promised her any reasonable length of compliance which lay within the compass of his station, offering even the cup to the laity in the observance of the Supper, and the use of the English liturgy. But all his blandishments and soothing arguments were of no avail ; his proposal was unhesitatingly

rejected. The Queen remained inflexible. At length, his successor, Pius V., lost patience, and, in February 1570, launched against her, a bull of excommunication. In this blasphemous document he affirms that "He who reigns above, to whom all power in heaven and earth is given, has consigned his one holy Catholic Church, out of which there is no salvation, to the sole government of St. Peter, the prince of the Apostles, and his successor, the bishop of Rome. This successor he has constituted supreme over all nations and kingdoms, to root out and pull down, to build and to plant." "Out of the plenitude of our Apostolic authority," he continues, "we declare Elizabeth a heretic, and an encourager of heretics, and that those who adhere to her lie under the censure of an anathema, and are cut off from the unity of the body of Christ. We likewise declare Elizabeth deprived of the pretended right to the throne, and of all dominion, dignity and privileges whatsoever, and that all the nobility and subjects of the said realm who have sworn to her in any manner whatsoever are for ever absolved from any such oaths, and from all obligation of fidelity and allegiance. . . . We likewise command all the nobility, subjects, and others, that they do not presume to obey her orders, commands, or laws for the future; and those who act otherwise are involved in the same sentence of condemnation."

The effect of such a fulmination of Papal authority upon an ignorant and excitable population who had been long taught to regard England with bitter hatred, and to cherish the most ardent devotion to the Papacy, it is easy to anticipate. A large number of the chieftains throughout the country, undismayed by the remembrance of former defeats, flew to arms, and the people in crowds rushed to their standards. The King of Spain, whose enmity towards Elizabeth as a favourer of the Reformation had been intensified by the rejection of an offer of marriage that he

had urgently pressed upon her acceptance after the demise of Queen Mary, again and again came to their aid with large reinforcements, and for years the island was kept in the throes of rebellion. When the ardour of the insurgents, under the chilling influence of repeated disasters, showed symptoms of declining, the Pope was on hand with fresh thunderbolts from the inexhaustible storehouse of his spiritual armoury to rouse their flagging zeal. Thus, in 1579, Gregory XIII. issued a Bull addressed “to all the prelates, princes, earls, barons, and the entire clergy, nobility and people of the kingdom of Ireland, calling upon them to ally to the support of Fitzmaurice, one of the most powerful of the chieftains who took an active part in promoting the rebellion; and for the purpose of provoking them to prompt and united action, admonishing and exhorting them *“not to be afraid of a woman who, having been long since bound by the chain of our anathema, and growing more and more vile every day, has departed from the Lord and the Lord from her,”* and granting to all of them who, “being contrite and confessing, or having the purpose of confessing,” should in any way aid in the good cause, “a plenary indulgence and remission of all sins in the same form as is commonly granted to those who set out for the wars against the Turks and for the recovery of the Holy Land.”

But all was in vain. Neither the thunders of the Vatican, nor the numbers and valour of the insurgents, nor the soldiers of Spain availed to overthrow the hated power of England and restore the reign of the Papacy. In every important encounter in the battle-field the English arms were invariably triumphant. At length, after a long and destructive contest, conducted with great barbarity on both sides, the rebellion was effectually suppressed and peace re-established. The country—long before so desolate—had now sunk to a condition of appalling wretchedness.

Thousands had perished in battle; and so long had the tillage of the soil been neglected, and so unsparing had been the destruction of the produce of the field, that a still larger number died of famine. Extensive tracts of country in the South, which had been the ch'ef theatre of the rebellion, were turned into a desert, where the slightest sound of life rarely broke the stillness of the scene. So great was the destitution that the survivors were content to "eat the dead carriions—happy when they could find them—yea, and one another soon after, insomuch as the very carcases they spared not to scrape out of their graves, and if they found a plot of water-cresses or shamrocks, there they flocked as to a feast." The state of things in the North was little better. There, too, rebellion issued in its wonted failure and wretchedness. About twenty years after the suppression of the revolt under Shane O'Neill, as already recorded, Hugh O'Neill, one of the same family, and the most powerful among the Irish chieftains of his time, under the special patronage and encouragement of the Pope—who lost no opportunity of fomenting rebellion in Ireland—renewed the attempt to overthrow the English rule and restore the ascendancy of the Papacy. This noted chieftain had sought to ingratiate himself with the Queen, and, by the profession of unbending loyalty, had succeeded in obtaining from her the restoration of the forfeited title of the Earl of Tyrone, and also of the large estates claimed by his family. His professions of loyalty, however, were merely a pretence. As soon as a favourable opportunity occurred he showed himself in his true character, and raised the standard of rebellion. But, though the Pope came to his aid with the whole weight of his spiritual authority, and the King of Spain sent him supplies of troops, arms, and ammunition, his attempt ended in failure and disaster. The few successes that at the outset had encouraged his arms

were speedily followed by crushing defeats, so that he was compelled to sue for mercy. With his overthrow the civil wars that had raged in the island during a large part of the reign of Elizabeth, and for the existence of which the plots and intrigues of the Jesuits were mainly responsible, may be said to have come to an end, leaving the island in a large measure depopulated, and in such a state of devastation and wretchedness that, in the language of Lord Mountjoy, who had commanded the English forces during the latter part of the oft-renewed contest, it was “nothing but carcases and ashes.”

The memory of Elizabeth has been loaded with much unmerited opprobrium by Romish writers. The Virgin Queen has been charged with relentless persecution of the Irish Catholics during the whole of her reign. But the allegations on which the charge is made to rest are, for the most part, the creations of malice and hatred. It is certain that during the forty-five years she sat upon the throne, not a single individual among them suffered death for his religious opinions. She even treated them with indulgence, as long as they were loyal to their allegiance; but, when they engaged in secret conspiracies and sought to overthrow her government through the agency of treason and rebellion, she did not hesitate to treat them with merited severity. When priests and prelates came into the country as the emissaries of the Pope, for the express purpose of fomenting sedition, and, in the execution of their treasonable mission, taught the people that the Pope’s excommunication had divested Elizabeth of her right to the throne, and exhorted them to renounce their allegiance, and offered them indulgences to induce them to rise in open revolt, it is not to be wondered at that the detection of their guilt was followed by just retribution. And when these priests and prelates died, they suffered not because they were Romanists, not

because they prayed to the Virgin Mary, or adored the Saints, or believed in Transubstantiation, but because they engaged in secret conspiracies to subvert the government and the law of the country. A proclamation, issued by the Queen in October 1591, against the entrance of Jesuits and seminary priests into the Kingdom makes this sufficiently evident. "We have saved our Kingdom," said the Queen, in this manifesto, "by the efficacy of the laws enacted against rebels, and those guilty of high treason, and *not against religion*, as has been falsely advanced by the favourers of those base views; which is the more flagrant (evident) from criminal suits having been instituted in which none were condemned or put to death *except for treason*, and for their avowal, that they would aid and assist the Pope and his army if sent to invade our realms. It is a matter also of notoriety that *none of our subjects have been put to death for their religion*, inasmuch as many possessed of riches, and professing a contrary belief to ours, are punished neither in their properties, their lives, nor their freedom, and are subject only to pay a certain fine for their refusal to frequent our churches—which is, on our part, a clear refutation of the aspersions and calumnies that have been propagated in foreign countries by those who have fled from their own." Elizabeth had good cause to regard with suspicion the whole Romish priesthood. Everywhere, under the inspiration and guidance of the Jesuits, they were united in a standing conspiracy to overthrow Protestantism and the power of England as the head and front of that offending. The Bartholomew massacre, and the slaughter of Coligny and the Huguenots in France, and the oft-recurring Autos-da-Fé in Spain, showed that there was no crime to which they were not prepared to resort in order to accomplish their object. The Spanish Armada was an undertaking in which their fiendish purpose found expression on a gigantic scale.

The life of the Queen herself was placed in daily peril by their machinations. In 1571, the King of Spain, with the full knowledge and approval of the Pope, sought to carry out a scheme that had been hatched by Roberto Ridolfi, a Florentine, to seize and murder the Queen as she was quitting London for the country, in August or September. Towards the close of the same year, the Duke of Alva sent two Italian assassins to England to attempt her life by poison or otherwise. Eighteen months afterwards, two other assassins, pensioners of Philip of Spain, came to Brussels to consult with the Duke of Alva in regard to her murder. Romish writers delight to vilify this great sovereign, and to insult her memory ; but as the true facts become known, her character stands vindicated from all their groundless and malicious aspersions. When her own life, and,—what was of still greater importance,—the life of the nation and the interests of religion were placed in imminent peril, she would have been grossly negligent of her most solemn obligations if she had not had recourse to such drastic measures as the exigencies of the hour imperatively demanded.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ULSTER PLANTATION, AND THE RISE OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND.

Accession of James VI. of Scotland to the throne of England—Hopes of the Romanists—disappointed—Conspiracy and Rebellion—A large portion of Ulster forfeited to the Crown—New Colonization scheme—Highly successful—particularly in Antrim and Down—A blessing even to the Native Irish—English Puritans and Scotch Presbyterians in increasing numbers settle in Ulster—Congregations formed—Ministers appointed—The fathers and founders of the Irish Presbyterian Church—Results of their labours.

HE suppression of the rebellion under Hugh O'Neill, and his submission to the Royal authority were followed by a few years of peace in Ulster. There was no abatement, however, in the hatred with which the English rule was generally regarded, nor in the plots and intrigues of the Jesuits to effect the restoration of Ireland to the Papal supremacy. It was certain that as soon as a favourable opportunity would present itself, the attempt to cast off the British yoke, and to reestablish the Papacy would be renewed. In the estimation of many, the accession of James VI. of Scotland to the English throne was an auspicious occurrence. It was confidently expected that the son of Mary Stuart, sprung by collateral descent from Malcolm Canmore, and consequently related to the blood royal of Ireland, would regard the Romish interest with favour. But, when it was found that this expectation was not to be realized, the old game of treason and rebellion was resumed. The two great Northern dynasts, O'Donnell, Earl of Tyrconnel, and O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone, united in a secret conspiracy to overthrow the Government, but before their plans were ripe for execution,

they were led to suspect that their treasonable designs had been discovered. Knowing that they were unable to contend successfully with the power of England, and that their guilt was too great and had been too often incurred, to warrant the slightest hope of a repetition of royal clemency, they sought safety in flight, and left their native shores, never to return. Soon after their flight, another Northern dynast perished in a bootless rebellion, and thus estates in the six Counties of Derry, Donegal, Tyrone, Fermanagh, Cavan, and Armagh, to the extent of a half a million of acres, were forfeited to the Crown.

These forfeitures prepared the way for carrying out a scheme that had been attempted on several former occasions, but that was destined only now to be put into successful execution. James wisely resolved to settle Ulster with colonists from England and Scotland, whose energy and enterprise were certain to improve the condition of the country, and on whose loyalty and devotion the Government could rely in times of danger. Every precaution was taken to prevent the failure that had attended former experiments of a like kind, and to ensure success. The plan of settlement was drawn up by the celebrated Lord Bacon, and its execution entrusted to Lord-Deputy Chichester, founder of the present Donegal family, and Sir John Davies, the Attorney-General. The grants of Land to the new settlers were not to exceed respectively a thousand, fifteen hundred, and two thousand acres. In these several grants, a proportion of sixty, ninety, and one hundred and twenty acres was allocated for the support of the clergy in addition to the tithes. Provision was also made for the endowment of free schools in the principal towns. The settlers were to be of three classes; first, English and Scotch, who were to plant with tenants from their own countries; secondly, servitors in Ireland, that is persons who had served the King in any

civil or military capacity, and who were not restricted in the choice of tenants ; and, thirdly, the native Irish, who were all to be freeholders, and who were to plant with those of their own nation and religion. The British settlers were required to pay to the Crown an annual rent of six and eightpence, the servitors, of ten shillings, and the Irish, of thirteen and fourpence, for every six acres. In addition, “the occupiers of the largest proportion were bound within four years to build a castle and bawn—the bawn was a walled enclosure, usually with towers at the angles—and to plant on their estates forty-eight able men, eighteen years old or upward, of English or Scotch descent. Those of the second class were obliged to build, within two years, a strong stone or brick house and bawn, and those of the third a bawn, while both were bound to plant a proportionate number of British families on their possessions, and to have their houses furnished with a sufficiency of arms.”

The new plantation was not confined to the forfeited counties. It extended more or less to the whole province, and in point of fact found its speediest and most successful accomplishment in the present Counties of Down and Antrim.

Con O'Neill, one of the great family of the O'Neills of Ulster, owned extensive tracts of land in these counties, which, as the penalty of his disaffection and attempts at rebellion became escheated to the Crown. Sir Arthur Chichester, Sir John Clotworthy, Mr. Conway, and other English gentlemen had already obtained large grants of lands in Antrim ; and now, Hugh Montgomery, of Broadstone, in Scotland, who subsequently became Lord Montgomery of the Ards, and James Hamilton, another native of Scotland, whose name has been already mentioned in connection with the establishment of Trinity College, Dublin, managed to secure a large portion of the newly-forfeited estates in Down.

It was obviously the interest of the new proprietors to settle their lands as speedily as possible with able and industrious tenants, and to offer such terms of tenancy as should secure such a result. Accordingly, English Puritans, and, in still larger numbers, Scotch Presbyterians began to pour into Ulster, carrying the Protestant religion with them, planting the germs of law and civilization, and laying the foundation of the prosperity that, ever since, has distinguished this northern province from the rest of Ireland. So rapid was the process of settlement that, as early as 1615—just five years after its commencement—no less than 107 castles with bawns, 19 castles without bawns, 42 bawns without castles or houses, and 1897 dwelling houses of stone or timber had been erected. Only a few years further on and the whole country assumed a new and improved aspect. The wretched hovels that had previously sheltered a rude and lawless peasantry were supplanted by substantial and comfortable dwelling houses, tenanted by a highly industrious and orderly population ; lands that had long been little better than a barren waste, yielding a miserable subsistence to a thriftless and indolent race, were transformed, as if by magic, into well-tilled farms that rewarded the intelligent and laborious occupants with abundant harvests ; meadow stretches where the lark had seldom found a rival to challenge the empire of its song were made vocal with the bleating of the sheep and the lowing of the cattle that in ample flocks and herds fattened upon their rich pastures ; old and almost deserted cities were replenished with inhabitants ; new towns sprang into existence, and, in every direction scenes of busy industry met the eye. The long reign of disorder and desolation, of rags and wretchedness, of improvidence and want, was over. The whole province thrilled with the pulsations of a new life, and, like a giant

refreshed by a long sleep, awoke to run a race of unwonted prosperity and progresss.

In Antrim and Down, the process of settlement was peculiarly rapid. In the former, Sir Arthur Chichester, Sir Hugh Clotworthy, Mr. Conway, and other proprietors were diligent in their efforts to improve their estates, and it was not long till they had the satisfaction of seeing their lands occupied by a large band of able and successful colonists, and the foundations laid of such towns as Antrim, Ballymena, Belfast, Carrickfergus, and Lisburn. In Down, the Lords Montgomery and Hamilton were, if possible, still more active and successful in their endeavours to effect the settlement of their newly-acquired possessions. "Having a good bargain themselves," says a contemporary writer, "they make some of their friends sharers as free-holders under them. Thus came several farmers under Mr. Montgomery, gentlemen from Scotland, of the names of the Shaws, Calderwoods, Boyds, of the Keiths from the North. And some foundations are laid for towns and incorporations, as Newton, Donaghadee, Comber, Old and New Grey Abbey. Many Hamiltons also followed Sir James, especially his own brethren, all of them worthy men; and other farmers, as the Maxwells, Rosses, Barclays, Moores, Bayleys, and others, whose posterity holds good to this day. He also founded towns and incorporations, viz. Bangor, Holywood, and Killileagh, where he built a castle, and Ballywalter. Those foundations being laid, the Scots came hither apace, and became tenants willingly, and subtenants to their countrymen (whose manner and way they knew), so that in a short time the country began again to be inhabited."

The towns of Coleraine and Londonderry had been built at a yet earlier period in the history of the Plantation by the Corporation of London, which had attained possession of a large part of what had been called the County of Coleraine,

but which was now named, after its new proprietors, the County of Londonderry.

The new settlement proved a blessing even to the native Irish themselves. Under the old Breton law, which ruled Ireland from the fifth to the seventeenth century, the condition of the great mass of the people was little better than that of slaves. They were completely at the mercy of the chiefs of their septs, who might remove them at any moment from one district to another, or expel them from the territory altogether. The cultivators of the soil were mere tenants at will, who had no security that the lands they tilled one year would be theirs the next. They were thus deprived of all the incentives to industry, and exposed to the evils of indolence ; for what inducement could they have to attempt any improvement either in their dwellings or in their modes of husbandry, when they knew not how soon they might lose their tenements. They were also branded with social inferiority. They were denied the profession of arms. They could neither act as jurors, nor appear as witnesses, nor inherit property. They were, moreover, subjected to several excessive extortions at the hands of their Chieftains, and kept in poverty by frequent robberies. The idle kerns and gallow-glasses—vagabond “gentlemen” who lived by the sword, and who were the hangers-on of the great families—might at any time quarter themselves upon them, and devour their substance. But, under the new *régime*, all this was altered. Their civil rights were recognised and protected. The badge that stamped them as an inferior race was removed. The lands they cultivated were held by a tenure with which none could interfere ; oppressive exactions were abolished ; robberies of their property were repressed with a firm hand, and idle “gentlemen” could no longer force themselves upon their hospitality. Besides, mingling with the new settlers, they necessarily caught something of their spirit, and, profit-

ing by their example, rose to a condition of social existence that offered a strong contrast to the abject degradation and squalid misery of other days. Many of them also passed over into the ranks of Protestantism, and became orderly and peaceable in their habits, and loyal subjects of the British Crown.

It was not all plain sailing with the new settlers. The “marshiness and fogginess” of the island, which long and internecine wars had reduced to the condition of a wilderness, generated a disease that proved fatal to many of them; and the “woolfe and the woodkerne” imposed the necessity of constant watchfulness for the safety of their lives and property. Yet, in spite of all the difficulties and dangers that attended the new enterprise, it flourished amazingly. The stream of immigration never ceased to flow, and, though checked at times by the unsettled state of the country and still more by the violent efforts of the bishops of the Establishment to compel uniformity of worship, it continued to roll on in increasing volume till the close of the century. In 1580, the total population of the island was probably half a million, with hardly a protestant among them. In 1641, the population had increased to a million and a half, including 260,000 protestants, chiefly in Ulster, and very largely Scotch. Between 1690 and 1698, no less than 80,000 Scots passed into Ulster. It is not surprising, therefore, to find it stated by a writer of the last century that this province, particularly in the eastern part of it, including the two great counties of Down and Antrim, which at present comprise about one seventh of the population and one sixth of the valuation of the rateable property of the whole island, became another Scotland in language, and manners, and religion.

The history of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland dates from the Ulster plantation, of which a brief account has now

been given. As early as 1610, a large number of Presbyterians, for the most part, from Scotland, had settled in the province ; and as the new settlers multiplied congregations were organized, and public worship established according to the forms of the Presbyterian Church. Providentially, these congregations had hardly well taken shape till they were supplied with able and devoted pastors, with very few exceptions from Scotland, who were driven by persecution in their own land to seek refuge in the new settlement in Ulster.

On the death of Elizabeth in 1603, the direct succession in the Tudor line ceased, and James VI. of Scotland, who was the great-grandson of Margaret, eldest daughter of Henry VII. of England, obtained by inheritance the English Crown, thus uniting in his own person the sovereignty of both countries. James was brought up in the national church, which, it is well known, assumed at the Reformation the marked Presbyterian type that it retains at this hour. In his youth, he had for tutor the celebrated George Buchanan, a Presbyterian ; when he was married, the nuptial ceremony was performed by his own chaplain—David Lyndsay, the only Scotch Presbyterian minister who ever united a royal pair ; when he brought his young bride home from Denmark, and wished to have her solemnly crowned, he chose Robert Bruce, one of the ministers of Edinburgh to place the crown upon her brow : on the same occasion, “Melville, assuming the Laureate, read his noble poem, the Stephaniskion.” These things would seem to indicate that he had strong Presbyterian leanings, and if we are to accept an address that he delivered about the same time (1590) to the General Assembly as the certain exponent of his sentiments, we should certainly come to the conclusion that his attachment to the religion of his Kingdom was warm and genuine. In

that address “he fell forth praising God that he was born in such a time as the time of the light of the gospel—to such a place as to be king in such a Kirk, the sincerest Kirk in the world.” “The Kirk of Geneva,” he continued “keepeth Pasche and Yule; what have they for them? they have no institution. As for our neighbor Kirk in England, it is an evil said mass in English, wanting nothing but the liftings (the elevations of the host). I charge you, my good people, ministers, doctors, elders, nobles, gentlemen, and barons, to stand to your purity, and to exhort the people to do the same; and I, forsooth, so long as I brook my life and crown, shall maintain the same against all deadly.” Perhaps the King was sincere when he uttered these words, but it is certain they were far from conveying his real sentiments. He had at an early period in his life contracted a partiality for the Episcopal polity as favourable to those exaggerated ideas of hereditary and indefeasible prerogative that ultimately drove his family from the throne, and a corresponding dislike to Presbytery as essentially democratic, and at variance with his kingly assumptions. His dislike to Presbytery found vent as early as 1584. In that year the parliament, which was only too ready to comply with the royal wishes, passed several acts that were subversive of the rights hitherto enjoyed by the church. By one, the King was declared to be supreme in all causes, and over all persons, and to decline his judgment was pronounced to be treason. By another, all convocations, except those specially licensed by the King, were declared to be unlawful. By a third, the chief jurisdiction of the church was lodged in the hands of the Episcopal body. These enactments awoke a feeling of resentment throughout the country, and an agitation for their abrogation was set on foot which eight years afterwards reached a successful issue. Among the clergy there were several who stood boldly forward, on the occasion, in the defence of the church,

and in the maintenance of her rights. Among these, Andrew Melville, whose services to the cause of Presbyterianism in Scotland are only secondary to those of Knox, was the most conspicuous. With the fearless courage of one of the old prophets in dealing with the Kings of Israel, this intrepid ecclesiastic did not hesitate to remind the royal despot that there were "two kings and two kingdoms in Scotland. There is Christ Jesus, the King, and His kingdom the Kirk, whose subject King James VI. is, and of whose kingdom, not a king, nor a lord, nor a head, but a member. And they whom Christ has called and commanded to watch over his church, and govern his spiritual kingdom, have sufficient power of Him and authority so to do, both together and severally, which no christian king should control or discharge, but fortify and assist." Though the King, at the time those unwelcome words fell upon his ears, affected to look pleased, he was yet more than ever resolved on getting rid of Presbytery, of which, on one occasion, he irreverently declared that "it agreeth as well with monarchy as God and the devil," and to establish prelacy in its stead as a system more in harmony with the unwarranted conceptions he had formed of his royal authority. He was wont to say, "no Bishop, no King." Accordingly, when he succeeded to the English Crown, and thereby acquired an immense accession to his power, he promptly took measures to give effect to his resolution. The church was deprived of the right to hold General Assemblies, except at the royal discretion. Andrew Melville, whose fearless assertion of her rights and privileges he had not forgotten, was thrown into prison on a frivolous pretext, where he languished for three years, when he was allowed to accept an invitation to become Professor of Divinity at Sedan, where he spent the remainder of his days; the well-known five articles of Perth, intended to bring the church

of Scotland into entire conformity with the church of England were imposed at the royal dictation, and the clergy who refused compliance subjected to severe persecution.

It was during the time that these events were transpiring in Scotland that the Plantation of Ulster was going on, and there can be no doubt that the success that attended the enterprise was, in a measure, due to their existence. The agreeable prospect not only of a very decided improvement in their worldly condition, but yet more, of a happy release from the persecution that was rampant in their own land, very naturally induced multitudes of Scotchmen to pass over into Ulster, the shores of which lay to many of them, at least, almost within sight, and where, as the new settlement grew and prospered, they were sure to find another Scotland to welcome their arrival. Happily, at this particular period, the Irish Established Church, though nominally Episcopal, was distinguished, as already indicated, by the spirit of an eminently wise and comprehensive tolerance. James Ussher, its primate, had strong Presbyterian leanings. In early youth he had been taught by a Presbyterian tutor, and in later years he had studied at a college pervaded largely by the leaven of Presbyterianism. The position of this eminent divine in relation to religion may be learned from the creed that he prepared for the use of the Irish Church, which was adopted as the creed of the Establishment by a convocation of the Archbishops and Bishops and the rest of the clergy of Ireland held at Dublin in 1615. This famous formulary, after which, some thirty years later, the yet more famous Westminster Confession of Faith was modelled, consists of one hundred and four articles, divided into nineteen sections, and is thoroughly evangelical. It sets forth with great distinctness those views of the divine decrees so lucidly propounded by the Great Reformer of Geneva. It teaches that the Scriptures are able to instruct sufficiently

in all points of doctrine and duty, and that we are justified by faith without our own works or merits. It makes no mention of the three orders of bishops, priests, and deacons ; and it ignores the necessity for episcopal ordination. It declares that the Lord's day is wholly to be dedicated to the service of God, and that the bishop of Rome is "that man of sin foretold in the Holy Scripture, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and abolish with the brightness of his coming." The adoption of this liberal and evangelical creed by the Irish National Church opened the door for the reception of Presbyterian ministers within the pale of the establishment, so that any such, with a perfectly good conscience, could minister at its altars and share in its dignities. Accordingly, when ministers of the Church of Scotland sought refuge from persecution in their native land among their fellow countrymen in Ulster, they were readily received into the bosom of the National Church, and allowed to conduct divine service after their own Scriptural fashion within their several parishes.

Among the faithful and devoted ministers who about this time settled in Ulster, a few deserve special notice as men of eminent zeal and abundant labours, and as the founders of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Of these, the first in point of time is Edward Brice, M.A. Mr. Brice had for many years been minister in Drymen, in Stirlingshire ; but being obliged to leave the kingdom in consequence of his refusal to acknowledge Spotswood, Archbishop of Glasgow, permanent moderator of the Synod of Clydesdale—the expedient then adopted for foisting prelacy upon the Scottish Church—he removed to Ulster in 1613, and settled in Broadisland or Ballycarry in Antrim, in the immediate neighbourhood of Wm. Edmonston, a former and intimate friend, who, four years before, had settled in the same locality. Six years afterwards, he was promoted by his countryman, Bishop

Echlin to be prebendary of Kilroot, but he continued to labour still in his former charge which was part of the prebend. Though, in his public ministrations, he confined himself exclusively to the Presbyterian mode of worship, he continued till his death, upwards of twenty years afterwards, to preach in the parish church, and to enjoy the tithes of the benefice. "In all his preaching he insisted most on the life of Christ in the heart, and on the light of his word and spirit in the mind."

Mr. Hubbard, a Puritan minister from England, is the next to claim our notice. He was episcopally ordained, but, having renounced prelacy, he was settled as minister of a nonconforming congregation at Southworth, London. King James, after his accession to the English Crown, had declared that he would either make the Puritans conform, or he would harry them out of the kingdom. Mr. Hubbard was one of those whose principles were too deep-rooted to be easily abandoned. He was consequently "harried out of the kingdom," and strange to say, his congregation resolved to accompany him in a body. On the invitation of Sir Arthur Chichester, who had been a fellow student with him at Cambridge under the celebrated Cartwright, both he and his people settled at Carrickfergus, in 1621. He was not, however, permitted to labour long in Ireland. He died about two years after his arrival, and his people, deprived of their much loved pastor, returned to England. Blair speaks of him as "an able, gracious man," and the fact that his people were ready to share with him in his exile rather than lose his ministrations furnishes a yet more decisive testimony to his worth. Mr. Hubbard was succeeded in Carrickfergus by James Glendinning, A. M., a native of Scotland, who had been educated at St. Leonards College, St. Andrews. Besides Carrickfergus, Mr. Glendinning also took charge of the adjoining parish of Carnmoney,

a plurality that we, on this side the Atlantic, can easily understand, and that was fully justified by the existing deficiency in the supply of ministers.

Two years previous to Mr. Hubbard's settlement at Carrickfergus, another Englishman, John Ridge, A.M., also a victim of the persecution of the times, on the presentation of Sir Arthur Chichester, was admitted to the pastorate of the congregation of Antrim. Blair styles him "the judicious and gracious minister of Antrim," and Livingstone says of him that "he used not to have many points in his sermon, but he so enlarged those he had, that it was scarcely possible for any hearer to forget his preaching. He was a great urger of charitable works, and a very humble man."

Whilst congregations in Antrim were being thus supplied with able and zealous pastors, Down, with probably a still larger Presbyterian population, was not left altogether unoccupied. Robert Cunningham, A.M., from Scotland, heads the list of the long array of Presbyterian ministers who have lived and laboured in that fine county, often appropriately described in these days as "the Yorkshire of Ireland."

Mr. Cunningham had been chaplain to the Earl of Buccleugh's regiment in Holland, and when the troops returned to Scotland, he removed to Ireland, and was admitted to the charge of Holywood and Craigavad by Bishop Echlin, on the 9th of November, 1615. "To my discerning eye," says Livingstone, "he was the one man who most resembled the meekness of Jesus Christ, in all his carriage, that ever I saw; and was so far reverenced of all, even by the wicked, that he was oft troubled with that Scripture, 'Woe to you when all men speak well of you.'

Eight years after Mr. Cunningham's settlement at Holywood, Robert Blair was settled in the neighbouring parish of Bangor. Mr. Blair was by far the ablest and most distinguished of the Presbyterian ministers who as yet had

settled in Ulster. He had been a regent or professor in the College of Glasgow, but had been obliged to resign his situation because of his opposition to prelacy. On the invitation of Lord Claneboy, he removed to Ireland, and after preaching three Sabbaths to the congregation of Bangor, he received a unanimous invitation to become their pastor. His very decided opposition to episcopacy and the use of the liturgy, it was feared, would prove obstacles to his settlement, but the difficulty was happily got over by an expedient suggested by the bishop of the diocese in which the claims of episcopacy and presbytery were alike recognised. "Whatever you account of episcopacy" said the bishop, in reply to Blair's scruples, "yet I know you account a presbytery to have divine warrant; will you not receive ordination from Mr. Cunningham and the adjacent brethren, and let me come in among you in no other relation than a presbyter." "This," says Blair, in his narrative of the occurrence, "I could not refuse, and so the matter was performed."

Blair was one of the most eminent ministers at this time in Ireland. He was an accomplished scholar, an acute and powerful reasoner, and a fluent speaker,—all his great gifts and acquirements were combined with the most ardent piety. It is recorded of him that he often spent whole nights in prayer. During the administration of Wentworth, better known as the Earl of Strafford, he suffered much persecution on account of his unyielding adherence to the Presbyterian cause, and was at length compelled to leave Bangor, and return to Scotland. Here he became colleague to Mr. William Annan, at Ayr, and was afterwards removed to St. Andrews. The celebrated Dr. Hugh Blair, of Edinburgh, author of the well-known "Lectures on Rhetoric," was his great grand-son.

Mr. Blair, shortly after his settlement at Bangor, was the

means of inducing James Hamilton, nephew of Lord Clanboye, to devote himself to the service of the church. Mr. Hamilton had been educated for the ministry in Scotland, but had hitherto given himself to secular pursuits. In 1625, having yielded to Mr. Blair's urgent persuasion, he was inducted into the congregation of Ballywalter, where he laboured with great diligence and success for many years.

These seven brethren are usually regarded as the fathers and founders of the present Presbyterian Church in Ireland ; but in this honourable distinction, Josias Welsh, Andrew Stewart, George Dunbar, and John Livingston, have unquestionably a right to share. Welsh was a son of the celebrated John Welsh of Ayr, who was married to Elizabeth, third daughter of John Knox, the great Reformer. He arrived in Ireland about the year 1626, and was settled, first at Oldstone, and afterwards, at Templepatrick, County Antrim, where "he had many seals to his ministry." His preaching was of a peculiarly awakening and rousing character, and from this circumstance, he was known among the country people as "the cock of the conscience." Andrew Stewart was settled at Donegore, County Antrim, in 1627. Livingston describes him as "a man very straight in the cause of God," and styles him, "a learned gentleman, and fervent in spirit, and a very successful minister of the word of God." Dunbar was for a length of time minister of Ayr, and was twice ejected in Scotland by the High Commission Court for his inflexible adherence to the Presbyterian cause. "When the messenger of the Court came to his house the second time, a young daughter of his, turning, said, 'And is Pharoah's heart hardened still?' while all that Mr. George said was to his wife, to provide the creels again. For, the former time, the children being young, they behoved to carry them away in creels upon horsebaek." He was detained a prisoner at Blackness for a long time, but being at length

released, he was banished by order of the Privy Council, and soon after removed to Ireland. He laboured successively at Carrickfergus and Ballymena, and ultimately settled at Larne, where he proved a most diligent minister. Livingston had been assistant in the parish of Torpichen, Scotland, but, on account of his opposition to prelacy, he was silenced by Spotswood, Archbishop of St. Andrew's in 1627. On the invitation of Lord Claneboy, he removed to Ireland in 1630, and was settled as pastor of the congregation of Killinchy. His ordination was conducted in the same way as that of Blair as already recorded. Though his ministry in Killinchy was of but short continuance, it was eminently successful, and that fine Presbyterian parish bears still the impress of his faithful labours. Under the administration of Wentworth he suffered much persecution, and was ultimately obliged to leave Ireland and return to Scotland, where in 1638, he was admitted minister of Stranraer, from which charge he was, ten years afterwards, translated to Ancrum in Teviotdale. During his ministry in Stranraer, great numbers from Ireland, largely of his former parishioners in Killinchy—on one occasion to the number of five hundred—went over at the stated celebration of the communion to receive that ordinance from his hands. After the fall of Strafford, the Killinchy people made several efforts to regain his services; but the pastoral relation between him and them was never renewed. Towards the close of his life he was one of the Commissioners sent from Scotland to confer with Charles II. regarding his return from exile, and the opinion that he then formed of the young King was one that was bitterly verified in the experience of the Scottish people during “the killing time,” when the Covenanters stood by their cause with stubborn bravery through all those years whose echo rings through Scotland to this hour. After the restoration, he was called before the authorities,

and, refusing to take the oath of allegiance pledging him to acknowledge the King to be supreme over all persons, and in all causes, civil and ecclesiastical, he was banished from the kingdom. In April, 1663, he went to Rotterdam, and, in December of the same year, was joined by his wife. The last years of his life were spent in private studies and in peace. He died at Rotterdam on the 9th of May, 1672. Two others, John McClelland and John Semple are entitled, in this connection, to a passing notice. Though they were never settled in congregations in Ireland, they bore an honoured share in laying the foundations of the Irish Presbyterian Church. McClelland was a school-master at Newton-Ards, County Down, where he prepared several promising young men for entering College. As he was a man of scholarship, well instructed in the Scriptures, and of undoubted piety, he was often employed by neighbouring ministers to preach in their pulpits. John Semple was a man of a similar stamp. Though not possessed of the scholarship of McClelland, he had greater and more popular gifts of utterance. He laboured extensively in evangelistic work in County Down, and "was a happy instrument in converting many souls to God."

These early fathers of the Irish Presbyterian Church were worthy to fill the position that, in the providence of God, and under the guidance of the Great Head of the Church, was assigned them. They were all men of talent and scholarship, being, with hardly an exception, graduates of one or another of the universities of the day, and some of them Professors. Most of them were gentlemen by birth, and some of them were scions of noble houses. Edward Brice was a brother to the Laird of Airth; Robert Blair and others were by birth of a like social standing. James Hamilton, as previously stated, was a nephew of Lord Claneboy; Livingston was a great grand-son of Alexander,

fifth Lord Livingston, and Josias Welsh held the same relationship to Lord Ochiltree. What is better, they were all men of true piety and deep-seated principle, thoroughly versed in divine truth, strongly attached to Presbyterianism, and, as their lives showed, ready to suffer the loss of all things rather than renounce the cause they loved. The impress they gave to the church they founded has never been effaced. Like letters chiselled in the durable rock, it is as marked and manifest to-day, as, when, amid labours abundant, it was first traced in outline. Among all the members of the Presbyterian family, there is none that stands more firmly and resolutely by the faith they taught or that adheres more closely and inflexibly to the simplicity and purity of Scriptural worship than the church they planted in Ireland. Though few in number, and beset with many difficulties, they did more for that land than all its other public servants of their own or of several previous generations. They established the principles of true religion within its borders to a larger extent than had been previously accomplished from the time that the Reformation first touched its shores. They began a work in Ulster, now the finest and most populous of its provinces, that converted it from being one of the most turbulent, disorderly and unprogressive sections of the kingdom into the most peaceable, law-abiding, and prosperous. And when the work they began shall have reached its culmination and the faith they propagated shall have achieved the peaceful conquest of its entire population that is assuredly enrolled among its future triumphs, the whole land, lifted up out of the ignorance, poverty, and crime that have for ages darkened its history, shall become resplendent with the glory of the material and moral excellence that never fails to spring from the prevalence and supremacy of a pure gospel.

CHAPTER V.

PROSPERITY AND PERSECUTION.

The Church growing apace—Remarkable Religious Revival at Oldstone—Opposition from Romish Priests and others—Persecution begun—Uniformity of worship enforced—The Presbyterian Ministers driven from their parishes, and obliged to leave the country—Some undertake to go to New England—The Eagle Wing—Failure of the enterprise—Religious revolution in Scotland—Thus, an asylum opened to the banished ministers—More persecution—Tyranny of Wentworth—The Black Oath—All Scots to be banished from Ulster—Fall of Strafford—His trial and execution—Beheading of Laud and Charles, his associates in tyranny and oppression.

AS ALREADY indicated, the ministers whose names are recorded in the foregoing chapter, were all men of high Christian character, and the fact that they chose to suffer exile rather than submit to an unscriptural mode of worship shows that they were also men of strong religious convictions, as well as of deep personal piety. Seldom has the Church of Christ in any land been favoured with a band of more faithful and devoted servants. As their aim was to revive and extend true religion within the field of their labours, they exhibited unwonted diligence in their endeavours to promote this great object. What one of them, Mr. Blair of Bangor, says of himself, may be fairly regarded as a just description of the fidelity with which they severally discharged the functions of their office. “I preached twice every week, besides the Lord’s day,” says that eminent divine, “on all which occasions I found little difficulty as to matter or method. But finding still that this fell short of reaching the design of a gospel ministry, and that the most part remained vastly ignorant, I saw the necessity of trying a more plain and familiar

way of instructing them; and, therefore, besides my public preaching, I spent as much time every week as my bodily strength could hold out with, in exhorting and catechising them. . . . knowing that diversity of gifts is entertaining to the hearer, Mr. Cunningham (of Holywood) and I did frequently preach for one another, and we also agreed to celebrate the sacrament of the Lord's Supper four times in each of our congregations annually, so that those in both parishes who were thriving in religion did communicate together on all those occasions." In dispensing the communion, though in an Establishment nominally episcopal, they all adhered to the Presbyterian usage; and, in their preaching they were no less united in proclaiming the distinguishing doctrines of the theology which in these days, is more frequently associated with the name of Calvin, and which, in those times, was universally maintained throughout the three National Churches of the empire. Their support, in some cases, was derived from the tithes of the parishes that enjoyed their labours, and, in others, from a stipulated amount, paid directly by the patron, in lieu of the tithe which was received directly by himself, supplemented occasionally by a stipend from the people. Other things peculiar to Presbyterian polity were not neglected. They had deacons for the poor, and elders for discipline. As they were few in number, and surrounded by many who had little sympathy with their Christian zeal, and who felt their own indolence rebuked by the activity and success of their labours, they were drawn together into frequent fellowship, and found an outward bond of union in monthly meetings usually held at Antrim, to which "as to a solemn invigorating feast, they diligently resorted accompanied by the more religious portion of the people." Livingston describes these meetings as follows:—"We used ordinarily to meet the first Friday of every month at Antrim,

where was a great and good congregation, and that day was spent in fasting and prayer, and public preaching. Commonly two preached every forenoon, and two in the afternoon. We used to come together the Thursday's night before, and stayed the Friday's night after, and consulted about such things as concerned the carrying on of the work of God ; and these meetings among ourselves were sometimes as profitable as either presbyteries or synods. Such as laid religion to heart used to convene to these meetings, especially out of the Six-mile-water valley, which was nearest hand, and where was the greatest number of religious people ; and frequently the Sabbath after the Friday's meeting the communion was celebrated in one or other of our parishes. Among all the ministers, there was never any jar or jealousy ; yea, nor amongst the professors, the greatest number of them being Scots, and some good number of very gracious English ; all whose contention was to prefer others to themselves. And although the gifts of the ministers were much different, yet it was not observed that the people followed any to the undervaluing of others. I do not think there were more lively and experienced Christians anywhere than were these at this time in Ireland. The perpetual fear that the bishops would put away their ministers made them with great hunger wait on the ordinances. I have known them come several miles from their own houses to communions, to the Saturday's sermon, and spending the whole Saturday's night in several companies, sometimes a minister being with them, and sometimes themselves alone, in conference and prayer. They have then waited on the public ordinances the whole Sabbath, and spent the Sabbath night in the same way, and yet at the Monday's sermon were not troubled with sleepiness, and so they have not slept till they went home. In those days, it was no great difficulty for a minis-

ter to preach or pray in public or private, such was the hunger of the hearers, and it was hard to judge whether there was more of the Lord's presence in the public or private meetings.

These monthly meetings were begun as early as the year 1626, and grew out of a remarkable religious awakening which began in the previous year, and which, as the first important incident in the history of the Irish Presbyterian Church, is entitled to special notice. It has been said that

“He who of greatest works is finisher,
Oft employs the weakest minister.”

This religious revival is a striking illustration of the statement. It first began to make itself distinctly visible under the ministry of the Rev. James Glendinning, who, of all the brethren, was the least likely to initiate such a movement. Its history may best be given in the words of a narrative of the period. “Mr. Blair coming over from Bangor to Carrickfergus, on some business, and occasionally hearing Mr. Glendinning preach, perceived some sparkles of good inclination in him, yet found him not solid but weak, and not fitted for a public place and among the English, on which Mr. Blair did call him, and, using freedom with him, advised him to go to some place in the country among his countrymen, whereupon he went to Oldstone, near the town of Antrim, and was there placed. He was a man who would never have been chosen by a wise assembly of ministers, nor sent to begin a reformation in this land. For he was little better than distracted, yea, afterwards did actually become so. Yet this was the Lord's choice to begin with him the admirable work of God; which I mention on purpose that all men may see how the glory is only the Lord's in making a holy nation in this profane land, and that it was not by might, nor by man's wisdom, but by my spirit, saith the Lord.

At Oldstone, God made use of him to awaken the consciences of a lewd and secure people thereabouts. In seeing the lewdness and ungodly sinfulness of the people, he preached to them nothing but law-wrath, and the terrors of God for sin. And in very deed, for this only was he fitted, for hardly could he preach any other thing. But, behold the success ! For the hearers finding themselves condemned by the mouth of God speaking in His Word, fell into such anxiety and terror of conscience, that they looked on themselves as altogether lost and damned ; and this work appeared not in one single person or two, but multitudes were brought to understand their way, and to cry out, ‘men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved ?’ I have seen them myself stricken into a swoon with the word ; yea a dozen, in one day, carried out of doors as dead, so marvellous was the power of God smiting their hearts for sin, condemning and killing. And of these were none of the weaker sex or spirit, but indeed some of the boldest spirits, who formerly feared not with their swords to put a whole market-town in a fray, yet in defence of their stubbornness cared not to be in prison and the stocks, and being incorrigible, were so ready to do the like the next day. I have heard one of them, then a mighty strong man, now a mighty Christian, say that his end in coming to church was to consult with his companions how to work some mischief. And yet at one of these sermons was he so caught, that he was fully subdued. But why do I speak of him ? we knew, and yet know multitudes of such men who sinned and still gloried in it, because they feared no man, yet are now patterns of society, fearing to sin because they fear God. And this spread throughout the country to admiration, especially about that river, commonly called the Six-mile-water, for there this work began at first. At this time of people’s gathering to Christ, it pleased the Lord to visit

mercifully the honourable family in Antrim, so as Sir John Clotworthy, and my lady, his mother, and his own precious lady, did shine in an eminent manner in receiving the gospel, and offering themselves to the Lord ; whose example instantly other gentlemen followed, such as Captain Norton, and others, of whom the gospel made a clear and cleanly conquest."

As the revival proceeded, several of those in the parish of Oldstone who had become subject to its gracious influence began to meet together on the last Friday of every month for "prayer, mutual edification, and conference on what they found within them." At first, only a few attended, but, in a short time, the number became so great that "the ministers who had begotten them again to Christ thought fit that some of them should be still with them to prevent what hurt might follow." Accordingly Mr. Ridge, the minister of Antrim, "perceiving many people on both sides of the Six-mile-water awakened out of their security, made an overture that a monthly meeting might be set apart at Antrim, which was within a mile of Oldstone, and lay central for the awakened persons to resort to." The proposal was eagerly embraced ; the Antrim meetings were commenced ; the parish church was selected as the place of assembly ; the ministers of Down and Antrim willingly attended, and Sir John Clotworthy, the Lord of the soil, was forward to lend his sympathy and support. These meetings were eminently beneficial, and did much to direct and extend the great revival movement that was in progress at the time ; crowds resorted to them from all quarters, the religious influence that attended them spread far and wide, and, unlike some of the so-called revivals of our times, did not expire with a few weeks of fanatical excitement. "This blessed work of conversion, which was of several years continuance, spread, says Blair, one of the ministers, beyond the

bounds of Antrim and Down to the skirts of neighbouring counties. . . . Preaching and praying were so pleasant in those days, and hearers so eager and greedy that no day was long enough, nor any room great enough to answer their strong desires and large expectations."

This remarkable movement, as was to be expected, awoke opposition. The Romish priests became alarmed, two friars, trained at Salamanca, Spain, noted for their controversial powers, challenged Blair and Welsh, two of the Presbyterian ministers, to maintain their doctrines in a public discussion. The challenge was promptly accepted, and the terms of discussion speedily arranged. But when the appointed day arrived, the friars, deeming discretion the better part of valour, failed to make their appearance. Strange to say, several Episcopal clergymen seemed disposed to take up the challenge the friars had abandoned, and Mr. Blair was at length obliged to break a lance with one of them, whose name was Freeman. The subject of discussion was the doctrine of reprobation, one of the confessedly difficult questions of Calvinism ; but the ardent champion of Arminianism proved no match for his able and learned antagonist, and on the second day he was forced to retire in discomfiture from the contest.

Opposition of a more formidable character awaited the Presbyterian ministers of Ulster. They never were, in any true sense, dissenters from the Establishment, but were rather comprehended in it by a wise and liberal arrangement which allowed them to be inducted into livings and enjoy the tithes. As they refused to accept prelatic orders, the bishops, in deference to their scruples, joined with the Presbyterian ministers in their several localities in ordaining them. They were also wont to meet with the bishops for mutual consultation. Several of them were even members of the Convocation of 1634, which was specially convened to

effect a union between the English and Irish Churches. But now this wise and judicious arrangement was relentlessly abandoned. In England, high church principles had been rapidly gaining ascendancy, and, in consequence, conformity had begun to be rigorously enforced. With the elevation of the infamous Laud, Bishop of London, to the See of Canterbury, the troubles of Non-Conformists were greatly increased. In Ireland, the same principles began to prevail, and the same policy to be pursued. Presbyterian ministers, after thirty years' possession were, in many instances, ejected from their parishes, and abandoned to penury and want. Ussher, the Primate of Armagh, who was always the warm friend of the Presbyterian clergy, did what he could to shelter them from the storm, but, as the event proved, he was utterly unable, notwithstanding his high character and position, to afford them the protection he desired. In June, 1630, Blair and Livingston, then on a visit to their native land, were present at the celebrated revival of the Kirk of Shotts ; and their proceedings on that occasion gave great offence to the abettors of ritualism. Charges were accordingly preferred against them by some of the Scottish prelates ; and in consequence, in September, 1631, these two brethren were suspended from the ministry by Echlin, the Bishop of Down and Connor, in whose diocese their parishes were situate. They appealed to Ussher against the sentence ; and the primate immediately ordered his suffragan to remove it. But the matter did not end here. The accusers carried their complaint to London, and craved the intervention of the royal authority. Charles, now completely under the guidance of Laud, instructed the authorities in Ireland to renew the prosecution. Echlin, prompt to obey the will of his royal master, summoned not only the two offending brethren before him, but two others also, Welsh and Dunbar ; and on their refusal to abandon

their principles, and conform to Episcopacy, he deposed all the four from the office of the ministry. Through the interposition of powerful friends they were some time after allowed to resume their ministry for a few months, but the spirit of intolerance again prevailed, and the door of the church was effectually closed against them. Nothing else could have been expected. Charles himself was little inclined to regard non-conformity with favour. Laud, to whose counsels in ecclesiastical matters he was blindly obedient, uniformly acted as if the chief end of a bishop were to extinguish non-conformity altogether. Wentworth, to whom about this time the King entrusted the vice-royalty of Ireland was a man of kindred spirit. When he went to Ireland in 1634 to assume the reins of government, he took with him, in the capacity of chaplain, John Bramhall, a man of decided ability and extensive erudition, but a violent and intolerant churchman, whom Cromwell, afterwards, from his resemblance in spirit and temper to Laud, styled the Canterbury of Ireland. He had hardly entered upon office, when he appointed a royal commission to enquire into the state of the church in Ireland, and to report to Government. Bramhall was a leading member of this commission. When the report was forthcoming, the existing state of things was found to be truly appalling, whether the support of the clergy, or the state of the church edifices, or the character of the incumbents, was considered. Had the Vice-roy confined himself to the rectification of the innumerable gross abuses that disfigured the Establishment, and destroyed its usefulness, he would have conferred a lasting benefit of incalculable value upon the country, but this was not the only or the chief object he had in view. His great object was to reconstruct the Irish Church, to assimilate it to the Church of England, and above all, to purge it of the leaven of Puritanism. In pursuit of this design, in 1634,

he convened a parliament, and made arrangements at the same time for the meeting of a convocation of the clergy. By this convocation, “the church was virtually revolutionized. Bramhall, who had recently been appointed Bishop of Derry, dominated in the Upper House ; and Wentworth, by the sheer force of brow-beating and intimidation, compelled the Lower House to yield to his wishes. One hundred canons, closely resembling those provided for South Britain in 1603, were framed and adopted. The very first of these Canons substitutes the thirty-nine articles of the Church of England for the Confession drawn up by Ussher in 1615, and hitherto acknowledged as the Creed of the Irish Establishment. ‘We,’ it says, ‘do receive and approve the Book of Articles of Religion agreed upon by the arch-bishops and bishops and the whole clergy, in the Convocation holden at London in the year of our Lord God, 1562, for the avoiding of diversities of opinions, and for the establishing of consent touching true religion. And, therefore, if any hereafter shall affirm that *any* of the Articles are *in any part* superstitious or erroneous, or such as he may not with *a good conscience* subscribe unto, let him be excommunicated, and not absolved before he make a public revocation of his error.’ Another of these Canons breathes a still narrower spirit. “ Whosoever shall separate themselves from the communion of saints, as it is approved by the Apostles’ rules in the Church of Ireland, and combine themselves together in a new brotherhood, accounting the Christians who are conformable to the doctrine, government, rites and ceremonies of the Church of Ireland to be profane and unmeet for them to join with in Christian profession, or shall affirm and maintain that there are within this realm *other meetings, assemblies or congregations*, than such as by the laws of this land are held and allowed, which may rightly challenge to themselves the name of true and lawful churches,

let him be excommunicated, and not restored until he repent and publicly revoke his error." These Canons were not allowed to remain a dead letter on the statute-book of the church. The bishops immediately took steps to enforce them, and all clergymen who refused compliance were ejected from their livings and forbidden to preach within their parishes. Wentworth, at the same time, established a Court of High Commission which was empowered to inflict fines and imprisonment upon such of the people as voluntarily absented themselves from the public and prescribed worship.

It now seemed that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland would be crushed out of existence altogether. She was placed outside the pale of the law, and all the resources of arbitrary power were employed to effect her extinction. Many long years before she had started on what promised to be an eminently prosperous career. During these years she had continued to grow apace, and to shoot forth her branches on the right hand and on the left. Congregations had been formed, and, in the favourable workings of divine providence, had been supplied with ministers as able, faithful and evangelical as were to be found in any branch of the Reformed Church at the time. A great religious and moral reformation had been effected throughout the entire community through the instrumentality of her ministry, who had been allowed to carry on their work without interference, and to enjoy, without any compromise of principle, the advantages of the national Establishment. But now, a most disastrous change had taken place. In the very midst of their usefulness, and when the work in which they were engaged was prospering beyond their most sanguine expectations, her clergy were driven from their parishes, and forbidden, under heavy penalties, to exercise their ministry among their attached flocks. It is not surprising that, in such circumstances, both ministers

and people felt greatly discouraged, and that some of them lost heart altogether, and proposed to abandon the country, and to seek in the wilds of the Far West the liberty of conscience denied them in their own land. Accordingly, they proceeded to build at Groomsport, on the County Down coast, a ship of one hundred and fifty tons burthen, which they named the "Eagle Wing," to carry them across the Atlantic; and in the Autumn of 1636, sixteen years after the pilgrim fathers had landed at Plymouth, one hundred and forty emigrants, including several ministers, set sail from Belfast Lough, for New England. But the enterprise proved a failure; winds and waves refused to favour them. After being two months at sea, they were compelled to return, in a very shattered condition to the port of departure. Meanwhile, the ejected and silenced ministers, who still remained in the country, contrived to elude the authorities, and to preach to their people in barns and dwelling-houses as frequently as possible, though they were in constant danger of imprisonment, as their movements were constantly watched by adversaries intent upon bringing them into trouble.

Happily, Scotland, about this time, cast off the yoke of prelacy and boldly and successfully asserted for itself the right to worship God in the simple Presbyterian fashion that was dear to its people. In 1625, James died, and Charles I. succeeded him. Like his father, Charles had little love for Presbyterianism, and lent a ready ear to the advice of Laud to reduce the Scottish Church to conformity to the Church of England. For this purpose, he enjoined the use of a Liturgy compiled by Laud, which was simply an amended edition of the Romish Missal. The people had hitherto borne with ill-concealed indignation royal interference with their deeply-cherished national faith; but this fresh blow to their liberties and religion was more than

they could bear. When the Dean of Edinburgh, clad in a white surplice, began to read the new Service Book, in St. Giles's Church, a poor apple woman, named Janet Geddes, lifted the three-legged stool on which she sat, and crying out, "Fause loon ! dost thou say mess at my lug," flung it at the affrighted reader's head, who fled in terror from the tumult that immediately arose. This simple incident was the commencement of a memorable ecclesiastical revolution. The Scottish people resolved that they would tamely submit to royal and episcopal tyranny and oppression no longer. The national covenant, originally drawn up in 1580, binding all who subscribed to it to adhere to and defend at all hazards the doctrine and discipline of the Church of Scotland, was renewed on 1st March, 1638 ; nobles, gentry, ministers and people signing it with the greatest enthusiasm. The people of Scotland, thus firmly banded together, found little difficulty in emancipating themselves from the hated yoke of prelacy. Almost all the bishops found it convenient to retire into England, and the King was compelled to abandon the attempt to force episcopacy upon an aroused and reluctant nation. Towards the close of the year, the famous Glasgow Assembly met and chose the celebrated Alexander Henderson moderator. As soon as this Assembly was convened, it proceeded vigorously to the work of reformation, formally abolishing the episcopal form of church government, removing the bishops from their offices, declaring the Five Articles of Faith null and void, and condemning the Service Book which it had been attempted to force upon the church ; the moderator ending his closing address with the memorable and inspiring words—"we have now cast down the walls of Jericho : let him that rebuildeth them beware of the curse of Hiel the Bethelite."

This happy revolution was a great blessing to Scotland. It relieved it from an intolerable yoke and restored to its

people liberty of worship. It proved hardly less a blessing to the Irish Presbyterian Church. It opened a safe asylum for those of her faithful ministers who were ejected from their livings, and forced to flee from the country. It set an example to her people by which they were not slow to profit. It encouraged them to unite in offering the vigorous resistance to the arbitrary measures of their oppressor, which ultimately contributed in no small measure, to his downfall, and to the restoration of their religious freedom. There was urgent need for united and determined resistance, for it was obviously the design of Wentworth to extinguish their beloved church altogether. With this object in view, he issued a commission to Leslie, Bishop of Down, within whose diocese the Presbyterians were most numerous, empowering him to arrest in a summary manner, and to imprison during pleasure, the non-conformists within his ecclesiastical jurisdiction. He proceeded to still further extremities. To prevent the Presbyterians of the North, from uniting for the defence of their religion and liberty, as their brethren in Scotland had done, he prepared a form of oath conceived in the most slavish style of passive obedience, pledging all who took it to honour King Charles, not to protest against *any* of his royal commands, and not to enter into any covenant for mutual defence, without his Majesty's sovereign and regal authority. A proclamation, dated 21st May, 1639, required all the Scotch in Ulster, above the age of sixteen years, to enter into the engagement. This bond—henceforth commonly known by the odious designation of the Black Oath—was imposed upon males and females alike. Those who professed to be Roman Catholics were alone exempt from its obligation. To make its imposition the more humiliating, the people were compelled to take it *on their knees*, and that none might escape, the Episcopal clergy and churchwardens were required to make a return

of all the Scots resident in their respective parishes. The names of those who declined to swear were transmitted to Dublin, to be dealt with as the Lord Deputy might direct.

By such means Wentworth hoped to bend the Presbyterians of Ulster into servile obedience to his will. But he little knew the spirit of the people with whom he had to deal. To his astonishment, multitudes refused to take the oath, willing to endure any penalty rather than enter into an engagement which they abhorred. All were quite willing to pledge themselves to constitutional liberty, but they were not prepared to avow implicit obedience to the king *in everything he might be pleased to command*. The character of his reign hitherto had not been of a kind to encourage them to surrender their religion and liberty to his absolute disposal. Their just scruples were, however, contemptuously disregarded, and the highest penalties, short of death, were inflicted upon all who refused compliance. “Pregnant women were forced to travel considerable distances to the places appointed for taking the oaths. If they hesitated to attend, and still more, if they scrupled to swear, they were treated in a barbarous manner, so that crowds of defenceless females fled to the woods, and concealed themselves in caves, to escape their merciless persecutors. Respectable persons, untainted with crimes, were bound together and immured in dungeons. Several were dragged to Dublin, and fined in exorbitant sums, while multitudes fled to Scotland, leaving their houses and properties to certain ruin; and so many of the labouring population abandoned the country that it was scarcely possible to carry forward the necessary work of the harvest.”

Wentworth had not even yet filled up the full measure of his iniquity. Determined to extirpate Presbyterianism, root and branch, out of the land, he proceeded to yet further extremities, and actually drew up a plan for the removal of every Presbyterian from Ulster. Ships were to be provided

at the public expense, to carry them away, and they were to be obliged, under severe penalties, to take their departure within a prescribed period. It is sad to reflect that, in all these harsh and oppressive measures, he enjoyed the encouragement and co-operation of the bishops of the Establishment. Happily, this his last project failed of accomplishment. Had it been carried out, it would have led to the utter ruin of Protestantism in Ireland ; for, destitute of the powerful assistance of the numerous and resolute Presbyterian population, the few and scattered Protestants who would have remained in the kingdom, would have been utterly consumed in the terrible conflagration enkindled by Romish fanaticism only twelve months after.

The same stern and successful resistance of the arbitrary proceedings of Charles and his infamous advisers, Strafford and Laud, that had manifested itself in Scotland, extended to England as well as to Ireland. In both countries, the cause of freedom was seriously imperilled, demanding from its friends union and co-operation. The English patriots opened communication with Ireland where, it was evident, there were many who, like themselves, oppressed by the tyranny of a despotic Sovereign and the severities of the prelates, knew the value of civil and religious liberty, and were prepared to stand forward in its defence. To such as these, the distinguishing epithet of “ Puritan ” had been, at an early period, applied. In both kingdoms, they formed the only party, who, at this time, entertained correct views of constitutional liberty ; and though they have been grossly misrepresented and maligned, it is now generally acknowledged that they honourably shared with the Scotch Covenanters in the establishment of British freedom. “ So absolute,” says Hume, in his history of England, “ was the authority of the Crown that the precious spark of liberty had been kindled and was preserved by the Puritans alone ; and it is

to this sect that the English owe the whole freedom of the Constitution." In Ireland, they were numerous, and were to be found among the members of both houses of parliament; and in Ulster, though many had been forced to abandon the country and to flee to Scotland, they still constituted the predominant party. In England, they were more numerous still, and, ere long, became the ruling party. So decided was the influence that they now began to wield in Ireland, that Wentworth found it necessary to abandon his infamous project for the wholesale banishment of the Scots from the kingdom; and so numerous were they in the parliament which met in 1640 that they found little difficulty in controlling its legislation. The High Commission Court, which had been the chief engine of the cruel and arbitrary impositions of Strafford's Government, was abolished "as an intolerable grievance and contrary to the fundamental laws of the kingdom." A remonstrance was adopted, detailing in fifteen articles, the grievances imposed upon the kingdom during Strafford's government, and a committee appointed to carry it to England, for the purpose of presenting it to the king in person, and claiming an immediate redress of the grievances enumerated. This committee on their arrival in England found the oppressor of their country, who, a short time previous, had gone to London to confer with the King in regard to public affairs, stripped of all his great power, impeached by the Commons of England, and imprisoned under the charge of high treason.

The circumstances which led to this sudden and unexpected viscidissitude are well known. The pressing necessities of the King had at length compelled him to summon another parliament, which sat during the long period of nineteen years and has, therefore, been styled the Long Parliament. Its members were chosen at a time when the

encroachments of the prerogative upon the rights and privileges of the people had excited the utmost discontent throughout the kingdom, and roused a spirit of opposition to the Court that could no longer be subdued or repressed. On the third of November, 1640, it was opened by the King in person. The redress of the national grievances engaged its early attention. On the 11th of the month, Strafford, who was justly held to be the real author of many of the grievances of which the nation complained, was impeached of high treason, and committed to the Tower. On the 20th, the remonstrance of the Irish Commons was presented, and produced an impression most unfavourable to the Earl. The non-conformists of Ulster also presented a like remonstrance on their own behalf, detailing their grievances, both civil and religious, and petitioning for the enjoyment of liberty of conscience, and more particularly for the restoration of their banished pastors, and the endowment of an adequate ministry as essential to the welfare and security of the kingdom.

Meanwhile, the Commons proceeded with the impeachment of Wentworth, who some time before had been created Earl of Strafford. Sixteen of the charges against him related to his government of Ireland, among the most damaging of which were issuing a warrant to Bishop Leslie to imprison at pleasure the non-conformists of his diocese, and imposing the Black Oath without authority of Parliament. His trial commenced in Westminster Hall on the 21st of March, and, after seventeen sessions, closed on the 13th of April. The judicial was then exchanged for the legislative mode of procedure ; a bill of attainder was speedily passed by both houses of Parliament, the Royal assent was obtained, and the unfortunate but guilty Strafford was beheaded on Tower Hill, on the 12th of May, 1641, in the 49th year of his age, leaving behind him a name among the people of Ulster

hardly less execrable than those of Claverhouse and Dalzell among the people of Scotland. The two others, who were closely associated with him in the tyranny and oppression for which he justly suffered, met a like doom a few years afterwards. Laud died by the hand of the public executioner in January, 1645, and Charles in January, 1649.

CHAPTER VI.

THE IRISH MASSACRE OF 1641.

Great change in the public administration of affairs after Strafford's fall—Roman Catholics had now little to complain of—Spirit of discontent and disloyalty still prevalent—Outbreak resolved on—The various causes that united to bring it about—takes place—Indiscriminate slaughter of Protestants—The Castle and the Capital saved—Progress of the rebellion—particulars concerning—Romish writers have tried to deny or to extirminate its horrors—State of the Presbyterian Church at this time.

WHEN Strafford retired to England to confer with Charles regarding the measures to be taken for maintaining the royal cause in the face of all opposition, Parliament, which assembled a few months afterwards, freed from the restraints of his presence, became suddenly inspired with the spirit of liberty, and proceeded to relieve the country from the intolerable grievances of his administration. For once, the Presbyterians and the Roman Catholics, who had both felt the keen edge of his tyranny, combined for their mutual deliverance. United, they were more than a match for the friends and supporters of the Lord-Lieutenant and the prelates. Hardly a grievance of which the country complained was left unredressed. The High Commission Court, which had been the main instrument of Strafford's despotism, was abolished, as has been already recorded ; the unjust and oppressive proceedings of the ecclesiastical courts and the illegal and cruel severities of the prelates were annulled. The two Lords-justices, to whom, on the fall of Strafford, the government of the country had been committed, were both Puritans, and in full sympathy with them in their remedial measures. In all their official proceedings they manifested an earnest desire

to remove every trace of the misgovernment that had afflicted the kingdom. Fines that had been wrongfully imposed were remitted, and persons that had been unlawfully imprisoned were set free. Their administration, in consequence, was universally popular, and a new era of peace and prosperity seemed to be dawning on the country.

The Roman Catholics, who still constituted the bulk of the population, had now little to complain of. Their just rights were fully recognised. They enjoyed the free exercise of their religion, and every office of dignity and emolument in the country was open to them no less than to the Protestants. Hardly a single grievance remained to nourish a feeling of discontent in their breasts, or to supply a pretext for disloyalty and rebellion. And it seemed that at length they had settled down into a cheerful acceptance of the existing order of things. For forty years they had been at peace, and so far as outward appearances furnished means of judging, not for forty years more but for all time to come, they were certain to be at peace. The tranquility, however, that prevailed was but the stillness that precedes the storm. Beneath it lay, all unseen, like smouldering fires, designs of the most treasonable character formed long before, and now about to proclaim their unsuspected existence by the most dreadful outburst of race and creed hatred that had ever convulsed the country.

This memorable outbreak was, doubtless, the result of Jesuit intrigue, planned and brought to pass for the purpose of effecting the overthrow of the British power in Ireland, the restoration of the Papal supremacy, and, above all, the utter extirpation of the Protestant religion.

From the time that the Pope made a gift of Ireland to the English Crown till the Reformation, the Romish priesthood were always the obsequious supporters of the English power. Even bishops and archbishops did not hesitate to march to

the battlefield against their fellow-countrymen when they rose in rebellion. Were England still in communion with the See of Rome, they would doubtless now be no less zealous in the maintenance of its power. But, since the Reformation, and especially since the entrance of the Jesuits into the country, they have been as earnest and active in opposing the English rule as they had formerly been in supporting it. The secret of their opposition is to be found, not in the desire to free their country from a foreign yoke, but in the deep and implacable hatred they bear to the Protestant religion, and in the guilty desire they cherish to effect its utter extermination. As the British power has been its chief shelter, they have never ceased to conspire secretly for its overthrow, in the anticipation that its downfall would leave the Romish religion without a rival in the field ; and though for the last forty years they had apparently acquiesced in its supremacy, it was not because they had ceased to desire its destruction, or to conspire for its overthrow, but because they knew that the hour for striking an effective blow had not yet come. That hour, however, as they fondly imagined, was now at hand, and various causes had combined to bring it about.

The wars of Elizabeth's reign had left Ireland in such a dispeopled and depressed condition that, for long after, any attempt at rebellion must have necessarily ended in failure and disaster, but, during the forty years of peace that had now prevailed, a great change had taken place. The Romish population, even in the north, had increased greatly, and, if numbers could ensure success in a great uprising, numbers would certainly not be wanting, for, as the people had multiplied, they had been carefully trained by their spiritual guides to cherish the most intense hatred of every thing British and Protestant, and to expect the hour when the Saxon invaders and oppressors should be driven from their shores.

It required but little argument to induce a people subjected from their earliest years to such unwholesome tutelage, to unite in a secret and standing conspiracy which they were industriously taught to regard as certain to bring about the utter overthrow of the British power, the entire extirpation of the Protestant religion, the re-establishment of their own faith in its ancient supremacy, and the restoration of their country to the exclusive possession of its own children.

But a year or two before his sudden fall, Strafford had raised an army of eight thousand foot and one thousand horse to support Charles in his arbitrary measures, and especially to hold the Scots of the north in check, and to prevent them from rendering assistance to their compatriots in Scotland, who, at the time, were resolutely and successfully resisting the royal encroachments. The Parliament of England, seeing in this large and well-disciplined body of troops a force that might ultimately be employed for the subversion of their own liberties, succeeded, but not without difficulty, in inducing the king to disband it. The dispersed soldiers were Romanists almost to a man, animated by the same fierce hatred of the persons and religion of the British that rioted in the breasts of their fellow countrymen, and certain to render most effective service in any movement that promised the liberation of Ireland from its fancied bondage, and the extinction of the Protestant religion.

The descendants of the former owners of the forfeited estates in the North never abandoned the hope of regaining the lands their fathers had lost. They lived in favour at the courts of Rome and Madrid, where they were treated with the utmost consideration. Conscious that their deeply-cherished hopes could never be realized so long as the power of England was predominant in Ireland, they spent much of their time in planning and fomenting conspiracies for its entire and speedy subversion. They kept up constant cor-

respondence with their relatives and friends in Ireland, and, by this means, diligently sought to foster the spirit of discontent and disloyalty that they knew was prevalent among the people, and to incite them to rebellion. In the Irish priests, whom they were wont to meet in the daily intercourse of life, they found willing emissaries, filled with hatred of England as intense as their own, in deep sympathy with them in their secret plottings for the overthrow of its power, and ready, on their return to Ireland, to engage with the utmost zeal in sowing sedition among their co-religionists, and in securing their united adhesion to a scheme for the expulsion of the Saxon oppressors from their shores to which thousands of them already stood pledged. To encourage their friends in Ireland, who included the entire Celtic population of the island, to rally as one man around an undertaking which, they knew, commanded their warmest sympathy, they gave them the assurance of such help from the Continent as should place it beyond the possibility of failure.

It is certain that the Romish priests in Ireland, instigated by the Jesuits, were, as has been already indicated, deeply implicated in all the movements that issued in open rebellion. In taking the initiative in these movements, they were not altogether prompted by considerations professedly religious and patriotic. Motives of a less spiritual and more worldly character entered into their calculations and stimulated their exertions. They looked with an envious eye upon the ecclesiastical property that was controlled by the Protestant clergy, and did not shrink from involving the country in the horrors of civil war, in order that they might wrest it out of their hands and make it their own. The hour was now at hand, as they fondly imagined, for the realization of this, and all the other objects they hoped to accomplish. A number of favourable circumstances already enu-

merated had apparently conspired to further its arrival ; and, as it drew nigh, they plied all their energies with redoubled zeal. Every argument that could arouse the national prejudices and enkindle the religious animosity of an ignorant and excitable populace was vigorously employed ; and, if at any time, their pliant dupes showed symptoms of hesitation in view of the danger that would necessarily attend the enterprise, they sought to reanimate their wavering courage by reminding them of the success that had attended the late struggles of the Scots in defence of their national faith and independence, and by assuring them that the rupture between the king and the English parliament that had recently taken place would soon lead to civil war, when England, torn by the dissensions and conflicts of her own children, would be able to do but little to maintain and preserve her authority in Ireland.

At length, the long-projected insurrection broke out on Saturday, the 23rd of October, 1641, resulting in a massacre of the protestants of Ulster, for which the history of Christendom happily furnishes few parallels. With such secrecy and dissimulation had all the preparatory proceedings been conducted that it was not till their infuriated and savage foes were upon them that the unsuspecting and all-unprepared colonists were made aware of the impending danger. At first, the Scottish settlers were unmolested, but as the rebellion proceeded, all classes of protestants were involved in the same indiscriminate slaughter. Within a fortnight after the commencement of the insurrection, no less than thirty thousand Northerns appeared in arms, ready to carry fire and sword into every protestant home in Ulster, and determined to sweep away every trace of the Protestant religion out of the country.

It was the design of the conspirators to seize Dublin Castle at the outset, but happily this main part of their

scheme was frustrated by the promptness and energy of Owen O'Connolly, an elder of the Presbyterian Church, who had been bred a Romanist, but had been converted to Protestantism during the Oldstone revival. On the very day preceding the day appointed for the impending rising, O'Connolly met McMahon, an intimate acquaintance, and one of the leading conspirators, in Dublin, who, probably ignorant of his change of religion, cautiously confided to him the secret of the approaching outbreak. That very night, O'Connolly managed to convey the astounding intelligence to the Lords-justices, who promptly took measures by which the Castle and Capital were saved, and the peace of the surrounding districts preserved. In the sudden and terrible emergency, the colonists were unable, at first, to offer any effectual resistance. Two years before they had been disarmed by Strafford to prevent them from assisting their brethren in Scotland. Led by Sir Phelim O'Neill, the rebels seized Charlemont, the chief stronghold in the north, while other leaders seized all the other positions of importance in the province, with the exception of Enniskillen, Newton-Limavady, Coleraine, Carrickfergus, Lisburn and Belfast, which were happily preserved from capture by the vigilance and bravery of their inhabitants, and became places of refuge to those Protestants in the surrounding districts who had the good fortune to escape the merciless butchery of the blood-thirsty multitudes who, more ferocious than hungry wolves, were scattered over the whole province, everywhere slaking in the blood of their protestant neighbours those vengeful passions which their priesthood had been diligently fostering in their breasts for years. Ulster was now turned into a veritable shambles. Language fails to convey an adequate idea of the horrid scenes of which it became the theatre. Besides those that were killed outright, of helpless women, some were broiled on hot gridirons, and others were

first stripped naked, and then ripped up with knives ; of strong men, some had their eyes gouged out, or their hands or their ears cut off, others were buried alive, and others still were subjected to a yet worse fate--the rebels cut slices of flesh from their bodies, and then roasted them alive. Even tender infants were not allowed to escape in this dread carnival of butchery and blood. Some had their brains dashed out against stone walls; others were flung into boiling pots, or tossed into ditches to the pigs. On the very day on which the rebellion began, over fifty persons were murdered in the County of Monaghan, and fifteen in the County of Fermanagh. On the day after, one hundred and ninety-six, including men, women and children, were drowned at the bridge of Portadown, and there is credible evidence that no less than a thousand in all perished there in the same manner. On one occasion, Sir Phelim O'Neill issued an order for the slaughter of *all the Protestants in three adjacent parishes*, and the order was obeyed to the letter. In the depths of a winter of unusual severity, protestant planters of all ages were stripped naked, driven from their homes, and left to perish of cold and hunger in the open fields. It is said that the river Blackwater in Tyrone ran red with the blood of the murdered. To enter into a detailed statement of all the atrocities that were committed in this dread hour of inhuman barbarity is impossible. Some of them have sunk into oblivion ; others cannot be put in print, those that have been recorded would require volumes for their rehearsal. The following graphic and affecting description by Mrs. McCaulay, the female historian of England, will enable the reader to gather an accurate conception of the state of things in Ulster in this dark period of its history :—“ An universal massacre ensued ; nor age, nor sex, nor infancy were spared ; all conditions were involved in the general ruin. In vain did the unhappy victim appeal

to the sacred ties of humanity, hospitality, family connection, and all the tender obligations of social commerce ; companions, friends, relations, not only denied protection, but dealt with their own hands the fatal blow. In vain did the pious son plead for his devoted parent ; himself was doomed to suffer a more premature mortality. In vain did the tender mother attempt to soften the obdurate heart of the assassin in behalf of her helpless children ; she was reserved to see them cruelly butchered, and then to undergo a like fate. The weeping wife, lamenting over the mangled carcass of her husband, experienced a death no less horrid than that which she deplored. This scene of blood received a yet deeper stain from the wanton exercise of more execrable cruelty than had even yet occurred to the warm and fertile imagination of eastern barbarians. Women, whose feeble minds received a yet stronger expression of religious frenzy, were more ferocious than the men, and children, excited by the example and exhortation of their parents, stained their innocent age with the blackest deeds of human butchery.

“The persons of the English were not the only victims to the general rage ; their commodious homes and magnificent buildings were either consumed with fire, or laid level with the ground. Their cattle, though now part of the possession of their murderers, because they had belonged to abhorred heretics, were either killed outright, or, covered with wounds, were turned loose into the woods and deserts, thiere to abide a lingering, painful end. This amazing unexpected scene of horror was yet heightened by the bitter revilings, imprecations, threats, and insults, which everywhere resounded in the ears of the astounded English. Their sighs, groans, shrieks, cries, and bitter lamentations, were answered with—‘Spare neither man, woman, nor child ; the English are meat for dogs ; there shall not be one drop of English blood left

within the kingdom.' Nor did there want the most barbarous insults and exultations on beholding those expressions of agonising pain which a variety of torments extorted."

Though all classes of British Protestants, whether of English or Scotch origin, were alike doomed to destruction, yet, on none did the storm fall more heavily than on the ministers of the Establishment. Wentworth's policy of intolerance had driven most of the Scotch clergy and many of the more influential of the laity out of the kingdom, and when the dreadful deluge of carnage and blood was sweeping over Ulster, they were far beyond its ravages, and safe in their native land. But it was different with the Episcopal clergy. When their Presbyterian brethren were driven into exile, they enjoyed the full sunshine of State favour and patronage. But now, they, in their turn, were doomed to suffer, and to suffer too, to a far greater extent than their brethren of the Scottish Church had suffered. When they fell into the hands of the rebels no mercy was shown them. Some were hanged, then dismembered, and pieces of their own bodies thrust into their mouths in mockery ; others were drowned ; and others still were brutally murdered. One, the Reverend Thomas Murray, of Killyleagh, "was actually crucified in blasphemous mockery of the awful tragedy of Calvary between two other Protestant gentlemen ; his two sons were then killed and cut to pieces before their mother's eyes," after which, the mother was subjected to the like inhuman treatment.

The Bible has always been the special object of Romish hatred. During the insurrection the rebels taxed their ingenuity to discover methods whereby to express their deep detestation of the sacred volume. "They have torn it to pieces, say the Commissioners in their Remonstrance, presented by the agent for the Irish clergy to the English Commons scarcely four months after the breaking out of

the rebellion, they have kicked it up and down, treading it under foot, with leaping thereon, they causing a bagpipe to play the while ; laying also the leaves in the kennel, leaping and trampling thereupon, saying, ‘a plague on it, this book has bred all the quarrel,’ hoping within three weeks all the Bibles in Ireland should be so used, or worse, and that none should be left in the kingdom ; and while two Bibles were in burning, saying, that it was hell fire that was burning, and wishing they had all the Bibles in Christendom, that they might use them so.”

One special instance may suffice as an accurate representation of the dreadful scenes that were of daily occurrence, in this dark and troubled time, in all those parts of Ulster that had been settled by English and Scotch colonists. In 1610, William Hamilton, from Ayrshire, Scotland, settled on the farm of Ballybreagh, in the parish of Killinchy, which skirts the western shore of Lough Strangford, County Down. As the years wore on, the worthy farmer prospered more and more, and when the rebellion broke out there were few happier or more comfortable homes in Ulster. One evening, about a month after the outbreak, and just as family worship was concluded, Robert Gordon of Killyleagh arrived with the alarming tidings of the insurrection and of the murderous character it had assumed. As may well be imagined, the night was spent in dread suspense, for they knew not how soon the enemy might be upon them. The morning dawned, and the day passed away, but all remained quiet. As the evening again darkened around them a terrible thunder-storm swept over their dwelling, and, as it slightly abated, the sound of hurried footsteps was heard approaching the door. “Flee, flee,” exclaimed Walter Stewart, a friend and neighbour, as he entered ; “the foot of the murderer is abroad.” In haste and dread, they fled from the house and sought refuge in an adjacent wood. Scarcely had they found con-

cealment within its thickets, when the loud execrations of a fiendish and ferocious band of baffled and disappointed insurgents fell upon their ears. As they looked out stealthily from their hiding place towards the home from which they had fled in terror and alarm only a few minutes ago, they saw barn and byre wrapped in flames ; they saw also, to their infinite relief, the blood thirsty bandits moving off in the opposite direction. The flames soon reduced barn and byre to ashes, but, the wind changing suddenly, their dwelling-house was happily saved. About midnight, the fury of the elements subsided, and the following morning was calm and fair. However, the fugitives deemed it prudent still to court the shelter of their hiding place ; and it was not till the next day that Walter Stewart left their retreat to obtain a view of the surrounding country. Ascending a hill which commanded an extensive prospect, far as his eye could reach not a human being was to be seen, not one even of the usual indications of busy life. The oppressive silence was broken only by the lowing of houseless cattle that ranged the fields and woods for pasture. Early next morning he set out to make a wider survey, and proceeded southwards in the direction of Killyleagh. He had gone only a few miles when, in passing along the edge of a deep wood, he was startled by the wail of an infant and a slight rustling among the brushwood. Turning his gaze in the direction from which the sounds proceeded, he perceived a female form struggling among the briars with a babe on her bosom and a boy by her side. In the miserable plight in which he found the helpless wanderers—with faces lacerated by the prickly briars, and swollen with cold, and with eyes bloodshot—he failed at first to recognize them, though he knew them well. His presence awoke their worst fears, but when they speedily discovered who he was, their fears gave way to joy and gladness, and they willingly accompanied him back to Ballybreagh.

The story of the lonely wanderers is soon told. The family of Robert Knox, of Bellashean, had risen, as was their wont, in the early morning, to pursue their daily toil. Whilst the day was yet young, little Henry, the youngest of the family, was despatched on an errand to Killyleagh, a town which lay in the immediate neighbourhood. During his absence, a band of ruthless insurgents, armed with bludgeons, pitchforks and knives, suddenly rushed upon them, and murdered them in cold blood. When young Henry, who was now the sole surviving member of the family, returned, the first sight that attracted his attention, as he entered the bawn was the mangled carcass of his favourite little dog Rover. Suspecting from this painful spectacle that something unspeakably more dreadful had happened, he rushed into the house and called for his mother, but no answer came ; that mother's loved voice he was never to hear again. Appalled by the unwonted and ominous silence, broken only by the ticking of the old clock, he burst into a flood of tears and frantically called for his father and mother. As he did so, Margaret Hunter, an aunt, who had fled from her own home, entered, and, as she entered, he ran to her, and clung to her with passionate earnestness. Proceeding together, they opened the door of the parlour ; there lay, piled in a heap, the mangled remains of father and mother, brother and sister, the blood still warm and unclotted.

It was no time to indulge in idle grief. The aunt hastily put a little oatmeal into the corner of her plaid, and, with her babe hugged close to her bosom and Henry by her side, hurriedly fled from the appalling scene of butchery and blood. She had not gone far till she was alarmed by the sound of voices in a neighbouring wood. Eagerly looking around for a friendly shelter she saw a bridge at a little distance which seemed to offer a safe refuge. Hurrying for-

ward with all the speed that her strength and burden permitted she soon found concealment beneath its arch. None too soon did she reach the friendly retreat. Hardly had she passed under the arched covering when the sound of foot steps was heard overhead. For three days the fugitives remained in this strange hiding-place with nothing to relieve the pangs of hunger but a little oatmeal moistened by cold water from the stream spanned by the bridge that sheltered them. At last, apprehensive that they must perish of cold and hunger if they remained much longer where they were, committing themselves to the care of Him who had almost miraculously protected them so far, they left their hiding place, wandering they hardly knew whither, their only food the red berry from the briar and the withered haw from the thorn. It was on the third day of their lonely wandering that Walter Stewart met them.

The number of Protestants that were killed during this terrible outbreak of fiendish fanaticism has been variously estimated. According to the most reliable computation, 40,000 perished by violence within the first year of the rebellion. Some accounts increase the number five-fold. O'Mahony, an Irish Jesuit, in a work published in 1645, states that his party had then cut off 150,000 heretics. Sir Phelim O'Neill reported that he killed 600 English at Garvagh, in the County of Derry, and that *he had left neither man, woman, nor child alive*, in the barony of Munterloney, in County Tyrone. Barbarity so fearfully atrocious in its nature was quite in keeping with the character of the man who declared that "he would never leave off the work he had begun till mass should be sung or said in every church in Ireland, and that a Protestant should not live in Ireland, be he of what nation he would." To state, however, the number of those who were actually killed is only to state half the truth. Many, who were driven from

their homes, and compelled to seek such shelter as they could find in the open fields, perished of cold and hunger. A still larger number died of a pestilence occasioned by the refusal of the rebels in many parts to bury the mangled remains of the victims of their fury, and yet more by the crowding into the towns still held by the Protestants of multitudes for whom neither suitable accommodation nor sufficient food was available. An account of the ravages of this fatal disease, written at the time and still preserved, states that "in Coleraine there died in four months, by computation, six thousand ; in Carrickfergus, two thousand five hundred ; in Belfast and Malone, about two thousand ; and in Antrim and other places a proportionable number."

The massacre was truly appalling. The brief account of it that we have given furnishes but a faint outline of the dread reality. It seems to transport us to far off eastern lands, whose inhabitants, in far off times, in the wild insatiable ferocity of a nature that knew nothing of the transforming influences of the gospel or of modern civilization, were wont to luxuriate with fiendish joy in the indiscriminate slaughter of their foes. It is hardly to be wondered at that Romish writers, in more recent times, have sought to relieve their Church from the odium inseparable from a crime of so atrocious a character. Some of them have not hesitated to pronounce the massacre a myth, invented by Protestant writers for the purpose of casting discredit upon the Church of Rome. Others have sought to minimize its proportions, and to cast a veil over its hideous and revolting features by representing it, in so far as it may be said to have existed, as the just and inevitable retaliation of an innocent and inoffensive people upon vindictive and blood-thirsty Protestants who were the first to commence the bloody work. But nothing can exceed the impudence and effrontery of such attempts. Evidence of the most reliable

character exists in overwhelming abundance to prove the reality of its occurrence. Shortly after the rebellion had been successfully repressed, Parliament appointed commissioners to make a searching enquiry into the insurrection ; a great number of witnesses were examined on oath ; thirty-two volumes of the depositions thus taken still exist in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin, which place it beyond a doubt that the massacre was an unprovoked outburst of the persecuting spirit of Romanism, and yield silent yet irrefutable testimony to the reality of its worst horrors.

It cannot be denied that the Protestants sometimes retaliated with unnecessary and cruel severity upon their blood-thirsty enemies. It would have been exceedingly strange if they had not done so. When the Romanists had declared that they would be satisfied with nothing short of their utter extirpation, and when they had shown that the declaration was not meant to be an idle threat by murdering thousands in cold blood, sparing neither tender women nor helpless infants, it is not to be wondered at that the spirit of revenge sometimes rose to the ascendant, overriding all the better feelings of their nature, and hurrying them into deeds that cannot be defended. An instance of the kind claims special notice, because it has been adduced again and again by Romish writers to prove that the Protestants were the first aggressors. "On the morning of Monday, the 3rd of January, 1642, a party of Irish rebels, from both sides of the river Bann, headed by Alaster McColl McDonnell, surprised a detachment of the British stationed at Portna, near Kilrea, under the command of Captains Fergus, McDougall, Peebles, and Glover, and massacred between sixty and eighty of them in their beds. From this place, they crossed the river Bann and marched through the extensive district of the Route, with fire and sword, murdering men, women and children of the British, all along in their march to Ballintoy. Thence they proceeded

to Oldstone Castle, near Clough, which was surrendered to them by Mr. Kennedy, on thursday, upon the solemn assurance of McDonnell, that ‘none in the place should suffer in body or goods.’ Yet, notwithstanding this assurance, about twenty women, with children upon their backs and in their hands, were knocked down and murdered under the castle wall, and about three-score old men, women, and children, who had license to go to Larne or Carrickfergus, were that day or the next, murdered by the O’Hara’s party, within a mile and a-half of the said castle.”

It was not in the nature of things that such outrages, in which cruelty and perfidy were alike commingled, should be allowed to go unavenged. The betrayed and exasperated Protestants would have been more than men if they had not been ready to retaliate. It is not surprising, therefore, to learn that, six days after, a number of them, accompanied by a few soldiers, proceeded to a place called Island Magee, near Carrickfergus, in the County of Antrim, occupied largely by Romanists, and slew about thirty of them in revenge. Though all the facts of this outrage have been preserved and can be traced with absolute certainty, Romish writers have had the effrontery to place the date of its occurrence in the previous November, and to magnify the number slain into three thousand. By such barefaced and unblushing falsehoods, they have attempted to fasten upon the Protestants the guilt of having commenced a massacre. “Thirty persons put to death in January, 1642, when the cries of perishing men and women were going up from every corner in Ulster, have been converted into three thousand in the begining of November, and the crimes of the Irish represented as the self-defence of innocent victims defending themselves against unprovoked assassination. When will the Irish Catholics, when will the Roman Catholics learn that wounds will never heal which are skinned with lying? Not till they have done penance,

all of them by frank confession and humiliation—the Irish for crimes in their own island—the Catholics generally for their yet greater crimes throughout the world—can the past be forgotten, and their lawful claims on the conscience of mankind be equitably considered."

The Romish priesthood were the life and soul of this memorable rebellion. They gave it birth. They cradled it in its infancy. They watched over it with parental solicitude during all the years of its progress, till it finally expired amid the tears and groans of a deluded and despairing people. For the revolting scenes of butchery and blood that have left an indelible stain of infamy upon all who took part in it they were largely responsible. At a meeting in the abbey of Multifernan, West Meath, held about a fortnight before the outbreak, some of them who were present did not hesitate to urge a general massacre as the safest and most effectual method of putting down Protestant ascendancy ; and, though the inhuman proposal was not formally adopted, as the event proved, it was the guiding principle of the movement from its commencement to its close. Evor McMahon, the Romish bishop of Down and Connor, prompted Sir Phelim O'Neill to many of the worst of the atrocities that stain the memory of that ferocious leader ; the ruthless hordes that were the actual perpetrators of the bloody deeds that were exultingly committed, before going forth on their merciless errand were commonly anointed by their priests, who assured them that if they should fall in so glorious an undertaking they would certainly escape purgatory and go directly to heaven. That they might engage in the work of murder and devastation with the energy that springs from a sense of duty, they were told that the Protestants were worse than dogs and served the devil and that the killing of them was a meritorious act.

The memory of the massacre of 1641 can never be erased

from the minds of the Protestant population of Ulster. By many a fireside tales still continue to be told of awful scenes in that dread day of agony and blood. The event furnishes, to some extent, the explanation of the stern resistance which, in common with the Protestants of the other provinces, they continue to offer to the Home rule movement. They do not forget that it is the proud boast of Rome that she never changes, and are persuaded that, had she the power, she would not hesitate to renew those terrible atrocities that reddened the plains of Ulster with the blood of thousands of the best of its people two centuries and a-half ago. Who can blame them, if, regarding Home rule, disguised as it may be by its advocates, as just another name for Romish ascendancy in Ireland, they resolutely decline to place their lives and properties, their liberties and religion at the mercy of a church that has never yet uttered one word of repentance for the infamous crimes against humanity and religion that crowd her history, and that still claims the right to employ force in compelling submission to her supremacy ?

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland, during this dark and troubrous period, presented the melancholy spectacle of a temple in ruins. It was only in a few places that public ordinances could be observed. Most of the clergy had fled to Scotland, and those who had escaped the general slaughter, and still remained in the country, took refuge in the towns that were still in the hands of the Protestants. The churches, which had not been seized by the Romanists, were garrisoned and converted into places of refuge. The temple, however, though in ruins, was far from being utterly destroyed. The people who survived the wide-spread desolation had lost nothing of their ancient attachment to their beloved Zion. The very efforts of her enemies to effect her extermination had only served to gather their affections more closely around

her. The fidelity with which they clung to her communion, during the persecutions of Wentworth's administration, was still in healthful and vigorous activity. Better days were at hand, though the clouds were not all to be rolled away. The dismantled temple was soon to rise from its ruins, presenting proportions grander and more imposing than any that had yet marked its history. As we shall see in the following chapter, Scotland was not unmindful of her children in Ireland in the time of their great calamity, and with her timely intervention the day of their deliverance dawned.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CHURCH RISING OUT OF HER RUINS.

The Colonists unprepared for Defence—Join together for mutual protection—The Lords-Justices, the King, and the English parliament interfere—Effective help from Scotland—Arrival of Scottish forces—Ulster restored in part to peace—Episcopal Church almost extinguished—Presbyterian Church restored in added strength—First Presbytery—Open rupture between Charles and the Commons—Scotland gives aid to the Parliamentary party—The Westminster Assembly—The Covenant—The Presbyterian, now virtually the Established Church in Ulster. The rebellion renewed under Owen Roe O'Neil—The Kilkenny Council—The King assisted—The aid injurious rather than otherwise—Execution of the King—Cromwell—The Church again in trouble—Sunshine restored.

THE long term of unbroken peace that preceded the outbreak that was now spreading disaster and devastation throughout the Province of Ulster had lulled the colonists into fatal security. Diligently plying the pursuits of peaceful industry from day to day, they never for a moment imagined that their Roman Catholic neighbours, with whom they were continually exchanging the ordinary courtesies of life, were united in a secret conspiracy for their utter extermination. Accordingly, when the rebellion broke out, it found them altogether unprepared for defence. It was not, however, to be expected that brave men would allow their lives to be sacrificed without a struggle, or permit those whose lives were dear to them as their own to fall helplessly into the hands of a ruthless multitude, who, disregarding all the ties that are wont to unite men in close sympathy, were daily filling the land with blood, sparing neither nearest neighbour, nor most intimate acquaintance, nor most confiding friend ; no, not even their own kindred,

if they happened to combine the profession of the Protestant religion with loyalty to the English crown. In several places they gathered together for mutual protection, and vigorously and successfully repelled the attacks of their assailants. For a time they were placed at a very serious disadvantage. Two years before, as already recorded, they had been disarmed by Strafford, and, with few exceptions, it was with arms of the rudest description that they were compelled to encounter the treacherous and savage hordes who, for years, had been secretly preparing for the havoc in which they were now exultingly indulging. No disparity in numbers, however, nor inferiority of appointments, ever tempted them to turn their backs to their foes ; and, if they sometimes, in the flush of victory, sullied their prowess by deeds of cruelty, it must not be forgotten that they could not fail to be exasperated beyond measure by the remembrance of the inhuman butcheries that had stained the progress of the rebellion from its first commencement, and that may be fairly held to have placed their enemies beyond the ordinary usages of warfare. It is a fair presumption that they were, to some extent at least, nerved for the conflict that was suddenly and unexpectedly thrust upon them, by the knowledge and assurance that they would not be long left to bear the unequal struggle alone.

The Lords-Justices, who were charged with the government of the country, were not in a position to render them effective assistance. The time for a standing army had not yet come in the history of England, and they had no available force at hand that they could at once send to their aid. They did, however, all that it was in their power to do. As soon as they had provided for the security of the metropolis, they despatched intelligence of the outbreak to the King, who was at Edinburgh at the time, and to the houses of Parliament in London. They also sent commissions to leading

gentlemen in the county of Antrim, empowering them to take the command of all the forces in the county, and urging them, in common with all other loyal subjects of the crown, to use their best endeavours for the suppression of the rebellion. The King, as soon as he received the intelligence transmitted by the Lords-Justices, sent a despatch, assuring the colonists of speedy and efficient support, and soon after forwarded commissions to leading gentlemen in the counties of Derry, Down, and Donegal, authorizing them to enlist regiments for the defence of the kingdom. These gentlemen lost no time in acting upon the commissions with which they were entrusted, and so forward were the colonists to enrol themselves in the different regiments they were empowered to raise that within a short time they were able to bring into the field a considerable force, both of foot and horse, which, if wanting in the training and equipments of a regular army, was certain to give a good account of itself in the day of trial, if enthusiasm and valour were to count for anything in the shock of battle.

For six months after the outbreak the colonists had to bear the brunt of the rebellion all alone ; yet, such were the skill and courage they brought to the conflict with their savage assailants that had they been compelled to depend entirely upon themselves there can hardly be a doubt that they would have ultimately come off more than conquerors. In every important encounter they were able to assert their superiority ; and, deriving renewed courage and confidence from every fresh achievement, they became at last almost irresistible.

It was not fitting, however, that they should be left to carry on the conflict unaided. They were fighting for more than their lives and the lives of others united to them by the closest and tenderest ties. The question to be decided

was, not merely whether they and their loved ones should live or die, but whether the English rule and the Protestant religion should be preserved in Ireland. This was a question of Imperial interest, and it was only proper that the whole power of the empire, if need were, should be brought to its solution. Unhappily, England, at the time, was not in a position to intervene with speedy and effective support. The national authorities were arrayed in bitter antagonism against each other and unable to act in concert. The King, supported by a large body of the higher classes and by the prelates and clergy of the Established Church, was endeavouring to reduce the parliament to unqualified submission to his will, and the parliament was no less strenuous in its efforts to maintain the laws and the liberties of the country in opposition to the royal prerogative. The jealousies that separated the two contending parties grew as time wore on, and ere long eventuated in civil war. Both parties professed to be desirous of extending help to the struggling colonists. Whether the King was sincere may be doubted. He had little love for the colonists, for he knew that their sympathies were entirely with the Commons. It has even been said that he had secretly lent encouragement to the conspiracy that resulted in the insurrection with which they were now compelled to contend, in the hope that thereby he would ultimately obtain control of the resources of the entire kingdom, and be thus placed in possession of an effective instrument for reducing the obnoxious parliament to submissive obedience. But whatever may have been the views and designs of the King, there can be no doubt that the Commons anxiously desired to assist the colonists. As soon as they received intelligence of the outbreak, they voted a liberal supply of money and a considerable body of men for the relief of Ireland; but as it became increasingly evident that their opposition to the

arbitrary measures of the King would speedily ripen into an open rupture, they hesitated to impair their strength for the coming conflict by detaching a large force for the reduction of the Irish rebels. At this juncture, Scotland interposed with effective help. The people of that country were in deep sympathy with their English brethren in their resistance of the royal encroachments. They themselves had but recently passed through a similar conflict, and happily had won a bloodless triumph. They were in still deeper sympathy with the Ulster colonists who were of their own flesh and blood. Five days after its commencement, the Scottish parliament, then in session, was informed of the outbreak. The unexpected intelligence awoke the deepest concern, and when it was followed two or three days after by fuller and more accurate information, they promptly offered three thousand stand of arms and ten thousand men for the relief of Ireland ; but, as it was necessary that England should be a consenting party to the arrangement, the necessary negotiations to this effect were immediately set on foot. These negotiations, unhappily, were delayed by the jealousies that existed between the King and the Commons ; and it was not till the following February that they were finally completed. Though great exertions were made to raise and embody the large force that the Scottish parliament had undertaken to provide, it was the middle of the following April before the first detachment, to the number of two thousand five hundred men, under the command of Major-General Robert Munro, an officer of much experience and skill, reached Carrickfergus, and, according to the terms of the stipulated agreement, were put in possession of the town and castle.

The Scottish General lost no time in entering upon the work before him. Joined by several militia regiments of Antrim and Down, which raised his army to an effec-

tive force of at least three thousand five hundred men, and eight troops of horse, he proceeded in search of the rebels, conducting the campaign with such energy and success that, by the middle of the following July, their power was effectually broken, and the province, in a large measure, restored to tranquility. It was not, however, till ten years after the outbreak that the rebellion, which extended to the whole of Ireland though it found its worst development in Ulster, struck as if with a thunderbolt by the strong arm of Cromwell, finally expired in a deluge of blood.

The outbreak was disastrous in the extreme to the Episcopal Church. It swept her almost entirely out of existence. Many of her clergy were brutally murdered, and of those who were living when peace was partially restored, only a few and not one of the prelates remained in the province. After the execution of Charles, public service according to the Episcopal ritual entirely ceased, and in all those parts of the kingdom where the Irish displaced the English power, the prelates of the Establishment were ejected from their Sees, and their splendid palaces and lordly revenues appropriated by Romish bishops.

On the contrary, the Presbyterian Church emerged from the storm stronger and more stable than ever. For about the first thirty years in her history she formed a part of the Establishment, which, though nominally Episcopal, permitted her ministers and people the use of her worship and polity. During Strafford's administration she was almost altogether extinguished. Her public services were interdicted, her ministers were silenced, and her people required, under heavy penalties, to conform to Episcopacy. During that dark and disastrous period her adherents never swerved from their allegiance to her principles and usages, and now that after a period of still greater trial they were again at liberty to worship according to her simple forms, with

a loyalty that had lost none of its old fervour they joyfully gathered around her banner anew. From the commencement of the plantation, they had always formed the majority of the Protestant population of the province, but now their number was greatly increased by accessions to their ranks of many Episcopalians, some of whom had never been sincerely attached to prelacy, and others of whom, whilst Episcopalian in principle, were alienated from their church when they beheld her bishops and higher clergy in England joining with a despot King in trampling under foot the liberties of the kingdom, as well as by the return from Scotland of many who, during the last four years, had fled to their native land to escape from the dangers of the times. In these circumstances the Presbyterian Church felt encouraged to assume a more distinctly separate existence as the Protestant Church in Ulster. The opportune arrival of the Scottish forces put into her hands the means of effecting the necessary organization, and from this time till the Restoration she was virtually the Established Church of the Province.

According to the wise and salutary practice of the church and nation of Scotland at this period, most of the regiments that composed the Scottish army that had been sent over for the relief of Ireland were accompanied by chaplains, who were ordained ministers of the national church, and firmly attached to her doctrine and discipline, worship and polity. These ministers, when the pacification of the province had been in a great measure effected, and when the army had settled in quarters at Carrickfergus, proceeded, with the concurrence of the General and of the several Colonels to select from among the officers men of intelligence and piety to act as ruling elders in each of the regiments to which they were attached. Having erected sessions in four of the regiments, they took a step further in the process of organization, and formed the four sessions into a presbytery according to the discipline of the Church of Scotland.

The first meeting of the newly organized body, memorable as the first regularly constituted presbytery held in Ireland, took place at Carrickfergus, on Friday, the 10th day of June, 1642, and was attended by five ministers and four ruling elders. The names of the ministers were Hugh Cunningham, Thomas Peebles, John Baird, John Scott, and John Aird. Two others, John Livingston and James Simpson, being elsewhere on duty, were unable to be present. All these ministers, with the exception of Aird and Scott, were subsequently settled in congregations in Ulster. According to previous appointment, Mr. Baird preached on the latter part of the 51st Psalm, "Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion ; build thou the walls of Jerusalem." Following Presbyterian usage, a moderator and clerk were appointed, and thus the foundations were laid of a duly organized Presbyterian Church in Ireland, which, throughout all the vicissitudes of its eventful history, has proved an unspeakable blessing to that country, and, at this hour, is rendering inestimable service to the cause of truth all the world over. Before separating, the newly-organized court agreed to meet weekly, at least for a time, each meeting to be opened with a sermon by one of the brethren.

The step now taken proved to be a most auspicious occurrence. It soon became evident that the Presbyterian people of Ulster had lost none of their ancient attachment to the church of their fathers. As the newly-formed presbytery met from time to time, there came urgent applications from different adjacent parishes to be received under its care, and to be supplied with Presbyterian ordinances. These applications were all cordially entertained, and in a short time seven congregations were organized in the County of Antrim and eight in the County of Down. It was easier, however, to organize congregations than to supply them with settled pastors. Except the army

chaplains, there was hardly a Presbyterian minister in the province. Of the goodly band who had laboured in the field before Wentworth's policy and the rebellion had unitedly laid the church in ruins, some had died, some had perished in the general destruction, and others were now ministering in parishes in their native land. To meet the pressing and growing want application was made to the parent church, and the General Assembly, unable to comply with the application, resorted to the expedient of sending over annually several of its members to labour for a few months in Ireland. By this judicious arrangement the church in Ulster rapidly revived, and "broke forth on the right hand and on the left." Additional congregations continued to be organized ; the deserted churches were once more crowded with earnest worshippers ; the people, recalled from their bondage and restored to their religious privileges, truly "came to Zion with songs and joy upon their heads." Several of the Episcopal clergy, who had survived the ravages of the rebellion, continued to perform divine worship according to the Common Prayer ; but many of them sought connection with the Presbytery, and, on professing repentance for their former courses, especially in relation to the black oath, and in submission to prelacy, were received into communion.

About two months after the establishment of the Presbytery at Carrickfergus the quarrel between Charles and the Commons issued in open rupture. Both parties made strenuous efforts to secure the aid and co-operation of Scotland. As already recorded, the sympathies of the Scottish people were almost entirely with the Commons. They themselves had successfully resisted the royal encroachments, but they knew that the King had yielded to their claims under the pressure of necessity, and had too much reason to fear that the concessions they had obtained would be speedily

revoked, if he should succeed in his contest with the Commons. Since then, great changes had taken place in ecclesiastical affairs in England. Parliament had proceeded to remodel the Established Church, and had shown a very decided leaning towards Presbytery. They had deprived the bishops of their seats in the House of Lords ; they had abolished prelacy ; they had summoned an Assembly of divines to meet at Westminster, to consult as to “the setting such a government in the church as may be agreeable to God’s Holy Word, and to bring it into nearer agreement with the Church of Scotland, and the other Reformed churches abroad.”

This celebrated Assembly, though prohibited by a royal proclamation, met in Henry VII.’s Chapel, Westminster, on the first of July, 1643 ; but as winter approached, the sittings were held in the Jerusalem chamber which was more comfortable. It consisted of one hundred and twenty-one divines, and thirty lay assessors, but about sixty was the average daily attendance. A few months after its first meeting it was joined by six commissioners from the Church of Scotland. Only two members connected with Ireland sat in this Assembly—Dr. Joshua Hoyle, Professor of Divinity in the Irish University, and Sir John Clatworthy, who attended as a lay assessor. Its sittings numbered one thousand one hundred and sixty-three in all, and stretched over a period of five years and a-half. It included in its members Episcopalian, Presbyterians, and Independents. The few Episcopalian who attended withdrew soon after the Assembly commenced its sittings ; the Independents counted in all not more than ten or twelve divines ; the Presbyterians formed the large majority, and, in consequence, all the great results of its labours bear a decidedly Presbyterian stamp. The Westminster Confession of Faith, the Catechisms, Larger and Shorter, and the Directory for public

worship remain as enduring memorials of the zeal and ability with which this truly Catholic council performed the work for which it was convened.

The recent ecclesiastical changes in England, as well as the desire that evidently existed to proceed still further in the work of reformation tended to draw the Scottish people more closely towards the parliamentary party, for, though they were strongly attached to the reigning family, they were not prepared to allow a mistaken loyalty to override their regard for the interests of religion and liberty. In harmony with prevailing public sentiment, and, for the purpose of binding in closer union the true friends of religion and liberty throughout the whole empire, the General Assembly framed a bond, known in history as the Solemn League and Covenant, pledging all who subscribed it "to labour for the preservation of the reformed religion in Scotland, and for the reformation of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland in doctrine, worship, discipline and government, according to the Word of God, and the example of the best Reformed churches ; to endeavour the extirpation of popery, prelacy, superstition, heresy, and schism ; to defend the privileges of the parliament, and the person and authority of the King : and reveal all malignants and incendiaries who should obstruct their purposes." On the very day on which this famous bond was adopted by the General Assembly, it passed the Estates of the realm, then in session at Edinburgh, and the next morning it was transmitted to both houses of parliament in London, by whom it was referred to a special committee of their own members, and of the Westminster divines, then in session, "to the intent that some expressions might be further explained, and that the kingdom of Ireland also might be taken into the same league and covenant." "With these

alterations, it was finally approved by the Commons, and monday, the 25th day of September, was appointed for the solemn swearing of it by the members both of the Parliament and Assembly.

On the day appointed, a solemn gathering of the Commons and the members of the Assembly met in St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, and, after prayer and suitable addresses by eminent divines, the Covenant was read article by article, "each person standing uncovered, with his right hand lifted up to heaven, worshipping the great name of God, and swearing to the performance of it. Dr. Gouge concluded with a prayer, after which the Commons went up into the chancel, and subscribed their names in one roll of parchment, and the Assembly in another, each of which contained a copy of the covenant." On the 15th of October, it was taken with like solemnity by the Lords, and subsequently in every county in England and Scotland. As the result of the solemn covenant to which both nations were thus publicly pledged, the Scottish army, numbering twenty-one thousand men, under the command of Leslie, the Earl of Leven, crossed the Tweed at Berwick, throwing the balance of power into the scale of the parliamentary party, and placing it soon after in full possession of the government of the country.

As the Solemn League and Covenant included Ireland in its provisions, measures were at once taken for its transmission to that kingdom. Strictly speaking, it had no legal authority in that country, as it had not received the sanction of the Irish parliament, yet nowhere did it meet with a more hearty acceptance than among the Protestant population of that part of the empire. Of late, they had experienced in a very high degree the advantages of union and co-operation. By joining together in one solid column for mutual defence, they had been able to save themselves from

utter destruction, and, as the times were still full of danger, they felt the necessity of continuing to move together shoulder to shoulder. In the spring of 1644, four ministers, appointed by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, arrived in Ulster, to supply, for a few months, according to an arrangement that was now followed yearly, the destitute congregations of the province with the ordinances of religion. These clergymen were commissioned to preach to their countrymen, and to urge them to enter into the covenant ; and, as they traversed the country, in the fulfilment of their high mission, they were everywhere received and welcomed with the utmost enthusiasm. In Down, Antrim, Derry, Donegal, Fermanagh—in all places visited, “the people were eager to subscribe the covenant. If any had scruples or objections to offer, pains were taken to meet and remove them, and if they still declined, their refusal exposed them to no penalty.” Even those of the Episcopal clergy who had as yet stood aloof from the Presbytery were forward to subscribe. From this time, protestant prelacy can hardly be said to have had an existence in Ireland. The Liturgy ceased to be used in public worship and the Directory took its place as the authorized guide in conducting the regular services of the church.

The Presbyterian Church in Ulster was now virtually the Established Church of the province. Her ministers preached in the parish churches, and received the parochial tithes. “In October, 1645, the parliament, now supreme in England, sent over three governors of the province of Ulster, to take charge of affairs in the north of Ireland.” These gentlemen recognized her as the State Church, and countenanced and encouraged her in her work. In these altered circumstances, she speedily arose out of her ruins, and, like a goodly vine, shot forth her branches into every corner of the land. Parishes were remodelled, sessions established, congrega-

tions supplied with preaching, and sealing ordinances dispensed, so that there could hardly be said to be a place within her bounds that was entirely destitute of public worship. In 1647, she could count on her roll nearly thirty ordained ministers in addition to the chaplains of the Scottish regiments which still garrisoned the province.

The success of the Scottish arms, supported by those of the colonists, reduced the hopes of the insurgents to the lowest ebb; but their hopes revived, when, in July 1642, Colonel Owen Roe O'Neill, whose coming had been for some time expected, landed safely on the coast of Donegal. This experienced officer, who had served with distinction in Spain and Germany, was immediately chosen to the supreme command, and, under his judicious management, the insurgents felt encouraged to renew the attempt in the accomplishment of which they had as yet signally failed. For the purpose of giving increased vigour and the appearance of legality to the insurrection, a synod, composed of several bishops and a large number of the inferior clergy, met in the City of Kilkenny, and declared "the war, openly Catholic, to be just and lawful." In accordance with a resolution passed at this meeting, a General Assembly, composed of two sections, one, consisting of prelates and nobles, and another, of the representatives of counties and towns, was held at the same city, on the 24th of October, 1643. Though this assembly never assumed the name, it exercised all the functions of a parliament. Its members professed loyalty to the King, but they disowned the authority of the Lords-justices. They ordained that "the possessions of the Protestant clergy in right of the church shall be deemed the possessions of the Catholic clergy." They resolved to commit the management of public affairs to a supreme council of twenty-four, and they adopted "an oath of association," which

the priesthood were enjoined to administer to every parishioner under pain of excommunication, binding those who took it to submit to no peace made without the consent of the General Assembly, and which did not include, as its main provision, the restoration of the Romish Church to the position it occupied in the island in the reign of King Henry VII.

One of the first measures of the Kilkenny confederacy was an offer of substantial aid to the King in his contest with the parliament. Charles, who had all the while kept up correspondence with the Irish Romanists in the hope of obtaining such aid, eagerly accepted the offer. After much negotiation, a cessation of hostilities between the royal forces and those of the confederacy was concluded at Siggintown, near Naas, on the 15th of September; the King to receive a subsidy of £30,000, and the confederacy to retain the churches and ecclesiastical property of which they had gained possession. This treaty was immediately followed by the transmission to England of ten regiments as the Irish reinforcement of the royal army. This aid, however, proved of little service to the king. With such skill and vigour were the movements of the parliamentary army conducted that the Irish auxiliaries were speedily either killed or captured; whilst the presence in the country of a force of Irish bandits, who had taken part in the recent atrocities in Ulster, awoke, both in England and Scotland, a feeling of more determined and united resistance, led to the early adoption and general acceptance of the Covenant, and thus contributed in no small measure to the speedy and entire overthrow of the Royalist party. Meanwhile, the arms of the insurgents in the north met with but little success. O'Neill was an able and accomplished commander, but, though he found in the countless hordes that followed his

standard a marvellous abundance of confident boastings, he was able to make but little headway against the stern, unyielding, valour of the less numerous but more resolute forces that opposed his arms. The rebellion was carried on in the southern provinces with just as little success. The Protestants, in this part of the island, were comparatively few in number, but they were better prepared for defence, and, under the leadership of able and skilful commanders, were not long in making the insurgents feel that their game was not yet won. When the Royalist cause was completely overthrown in England, and the last hope of success perished with the defeat at Worcester, Prince Rupert, and thousands of the Cavaliers went over to Ireland, in the hope of yet saving that kingdom for Charles. Their arrival lent fresh courage to the insurgents, and, with this valuable addition to their strength, a few faint gleams of sunshine shone upon their arms. But their renewed hopes soon sank in utter darkness. A few weeks later, Cromwell landed, and, after a series of victories in which the massacre of '41 was terribly avenged, the rebellion was completely suppressed, and the country restored to tranquillity with the surrender of Galway, in 1652.

From the time that the Scots crossed the border and united with the forces of the Long Parliament, it fared ill with Charles. To enter into a minute detail of the stirring events of this stormy period falls not within the design of this work. Suffice it to say that, so far as the unhappy monarch was concerned, the issue was most disastrous. His armies suffered repeated discomfitures, and his life fell a sacrifice to his criminal attempt to overthrow the liberties of the nation. He was beheaded at White-hall, on the 30th of January, 1649, "as a traitor to the country, and as the cause of all the blood that had been spilt during the late war." At this time, the majority of

the people of England were Presbyterians, and as long as the Presbyterian element constituted the majority of the Commons, such an event as the execution of the King was impossible. They were strongly attached to monarchy, and anxious only that its powers should be confined within constitutional limits. It was only when they were violently driven from the House, and a minority of Independents and other Sectaries, appropriately styled the Rump Parliament, had become the ruling power that such a sanguinary proceeding could find a majority in its favour.

The execution of the King awoke a feeling of indignation among the Presbyterian people of the three kingdoms, but nowhere did it meet with stronger condemnation than in Ulster. The Presbytery, at a meeting held at Belfast, just a fortnight after the event, had the boldness to denounce the regicides as guilty "of overturning the laws and liberties of the kingdom," of "rooting out all lawful and supreme magistracy," and of "introducing a fearful confusion and lawless anarchy." "With cruel hands," said they, "these men have put the King to death—an act so horrible as no history, divine or human, ever had a precedent to the like." This bold denunciation was published and the paper containing it was extensively circulated. It was laid before the remnant of a parliament then sitting in London, and was deemed of such consequence that no less distinguished a writer than the illustrious Milton was employed to prepare a reply. It soon obtained a more serious notice. When Cromwell had reduced Ireland to subjection to his party, the ministers were required to subscribe a bond called "The Engagement," pledging all who signed it to disown the title of Charles II. to the crown, and to support a government without a King and a House of Lords. The Presbyterian pastors who conscientiously adhered to the Solemn League and Covenant could not

possibly sign such a pledge and their refusal exposed them to the vengeance of the ruling powers. "They were violently excluded from their pulpits, their subsistence was withdrawn, they were in continual danger of being apprehended or imprisoned ; and at a council of war held at Carrickfergus in March, 1651, a formal act of banishment from the kingdom was passed against them." Many of them now returned to Scotland, and one of the few who remained has left on record the privations endured by himself and brethren. " Those that stayed in the country," says he, " though they could not exercise their ministry orderly as formerly, and though their stipends were sequestered, yet, changing their apparel to the habit of countrymen, they travelled into their own parishes frequently, and sometimes in other places, taking what opportunity they could to preach in the fields, or in the barns and glens ; and were seldom in their own houses. They persuaded the people to constancy in the received doctrines, in opposition to the wild heresies which were then spreading, and reminding them of their duty to their lawful magistrates, the King and Parliament, in opposition to the usurpation of the times, and in their (public), prayers always mentioning *the lawful magistrate.*" The party now in the ascendant proceeded to yet further extremities. Unable to silence the Presbyterian clergy altogether, they resolved on another expedient which they hoped would prove successful. They proposed to banish the leading Presbyterians of Antrim and Down to Munster, and a proclamation to this effect was actually issued. But before it could be carried into execution, their counsels underwent a marvellous change. Cromwell, finding his power so increased that he could act with more independence, and learning that the Irish Presbyterian clergy were pious and inoffensive—wholly devoted to their ministerial duties, and little likely to disturb his government—took them into his favour, and

granted them an ample allowance from the State, which continued to be paid till the Restoration.

A new era of peace and prosperity now dawned upon the church. Passing beyond the bounds of Antrim, Derry and Down, she planted her battlements firmly in Armagh, Fermanagh, Cavan, Tyrone and Monaghan. Old congregations were revived, new congregations were established. In 1653, she could count only twenty-four ministers on her roll ; at the Restoration the number had increased to seventy, having under their charge nearly eighty parishes or congregations, comprising a population of probably not far from one hundred thousand souls. "These ministers were associated in five Presbyteries which held monthly meetings, and annual visitations of all the churches within their bounds, and which were subordinate to a general Presbytery or Synod that ordinarily met four times in each year." Entire conformity with the mother Church of Scotland was strictly maintained. No candidate for the ministry was ordained until the Presbytery had received ample proof of his literary attainments, religious character, and theological views. He was also required, before ordination, to take the Solemn League and Covenant, and to declare his approval and acceptance of the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Catechisms, and the Directory. Ministers were settled solely on the call of their respective parishes, and legal bonds for their maintenance out of the tithes were executed by the landed proprietors. Strict discipline was exercised by Sessions and Presbyteries ; ministerial visitation from house to house was diligently maintained, and catechetical instruction of all classes, especially of the young, was carefully observed.

The objects of the rebellion of 1641 and of the ten years' war that followed have been already stated. The Romish clergy, who had much to do with framing and directing the movement, hoped to see, as the issue, Protestantism ex-

terminated, the Irish soil in exclusive possession of Romanists, and the papacy restored to the supremacy it held before the Reformation. But these hopes were bitterly disappointed. No movement in Ireland has ever been more disastrous to their cause. When it was brought to a final close, one half of the Romish population of the country, including a large number of the priesthood, had perished miserably, scarcely the third of the land of Ireland remained, in the hands of Catholics, the Romish religion was proscribed as unworthy of toleration, and Protestantism was planted more firmly in the island than ever.

But if the war begun in 1641 was most disastrous to the interests of Romanism in Ireland, it ultimately issued in conferring important benefits on Ireland itself. Under the Protectorate, the country attained to such prosperity as it had never known before. Home Rule, for which Irish Romanists are now so clamant, was entirely discarded. Ireland was identified with England and made a participant in every advantage that England possessed. Her separate parliament was swept away ; her representatives went to Westminster ; and one united parliament legislated for both countries. Law was vigorously enforced ; order was sternly maintained, the industrial resources of the country, under wise and judicious arrangements, were carefully developed. Had the same policy been pursued in the succeeding reign with the same vigorous energy, the lines of difference in the social condition of the two countries would have been obliterated generations ago, and Ireland would have been to-day as peaceable and prosperous as her larger and richer neighbour.

CHAPTER VIII.

DARKNESS AND LIGHT ALTERNATING.

Death of Cromwell—Succeeded by Richard his son—The Restoration—The Bishops and renewed persecution—rejection of Presbyterian ministers—The Blood Plot—Change in the Government's policy—Grant to Presbyterian ministers—Renewed hostility of the Government—The Lagan Presbytery—Churches closed—Emigration to America.

CROMWELL died in 1658 on what he was wont to speak of as his lucky day, the 3rd of September. Richard, his eldest son, succeeded him in the Protectorate without opposition, but it soon became manifest that the hands of the son were too feeble to hold the reins that had dropped from the iron grasp of the father. He occupied the exalted position that, in the strange evolution of events, he had reached, for but a short period. Had he possessed the commanding genius and unconquerable energy that peculiarly distinguished his father, it is highly probable that his Protectorate would have ended only with his death, and that, in consequence, the subsequent civil and ecclesiastical history of Great Britain and Ireland would have borne a very different aspect, in regard to the peculiar features of which it is useless to speculate. He died in the year 1712, when three of the Sovereigns that came after him had gone down to their graves, and the reign of the fourth was nearing its close.

Presbyterianism has been often described by its enemies as unfriendly to monarchy. “No bishop, no king” is their cry. Historically, the allegation has not a foot to stand on. When Charles was sentenced to be beheaded, the only State in Europe that was forward to utter a word of protest

against his execution, was the Presbyterian Republic of the United Provinces, and their protest was ably seconded by a vigorous remonstrance signed by fifty-seven ministers of the Provincial Synod of London, as well as by the strongly expressed disapproval of the Presbyterian people of the three kingdoms. When the Protectorate had spent its short-lived existence, and monarchy was restored, it was by Presbyterian influence mainly that the change was effected.

Charles II. was restored to the throne in 1660. Though the Presbyterian people of Scotland and Ireland took a leading part in the event, both alike met with an ill requittal at the hands of the ungrateful and perfidious monarch. Hardly had he been seated on the throne when, in direct violation of promises and engagements often made, he took steps that tended to the utter subversion of everything they were accustomed to hold in deepest veneration. Three months after he was proclaimed King, he proceeded to re-establish Protestant Episcopacy in Ireland. Eight of the former bishops were still living, and the Sees that were vacant were filled by fresh appointments. Bramhall, the bitter and inveterate opponent of the Presbyterians, was promoted to the primacy, and the celebrated Jeremy Taylor was made Bishop of Down and Connor. Many of the leading men who had been ardent supporters of the Protectorate, and not a few who had pledged themselves by oath to adhere to the Solemn League and Covenant, now became flaming Royalists and high-flying Episcopalians. Not content with accepting prelacy for themselves, they eagerly countenanced and encouraged all the arbitrary measures of the Government for enforcing it upon others. By such means they hoped to atone for past offences, and to reconcile themselves to the King who was known to be bent on re-establishing prelacy throughout his dominions as the only form of Protestantism that was

favourable to the intolerant and arbitrary claims of the royal prerogative. Sordid selfishness, not enlightened principle, was at the bottom of their conduct. The estates they held consisted, for the most part, of confiscated lands, which were still claimed by their former proprietors ; fear that the King might yield to such claims converted these mercenary time-servers into servile tools of his despotic power.

As the Restoration brought back the bishops, it brought back the persecutions also. The restored prelates, knowing that they could count on the support of the Crown, and of the leading men in the country, resolved to enforce entire conformity to the established ritual. Not content with the powers they always possessed, they procured the passage through parliament of a second Act of Conformity of the most stringent character, requiring every clergyman not only to profess in the presence of his congregation the fullest acceptance of the Prayer-Book, but also to subscribe a declaration that the subject, under no pretence whatever, might bear arms against the King, and that the Solemn League and Covenant was illegal and impious. Every person who should refuse to comply with these requirements was declared to be unfit to hold a benefice and forbidden, under heavy penalties, to teach, preach, or administer the sacraments, in any church, chapel, or public place. Clothed with the increased power which this Act gave them, the prelates were in haste to enforce its provisions. Jeremy Taylor, "the impersonation and special jewel of Anglicanism" though the professed advocate of toleration, was one of those who were most forward to undertake the congenial task. There were at the time seventy Presbyterian ministers in Ulster ; of these, eight conformed, and the rest, refusing compliance, were ejected from their parishes, and prohibited from exercising any ministerial duty among their attached and suffering flocks. It was hard for these devoted pastors to

be driven from their homes, and to be deprived of their means of support, yet these things they could have borne, not only without a murmur, but with rejoicing cheerfulness, had they been left at full liberty to continue their ministrations among their several congregations.

The ejection of these clergymen from their parishes was the commencement of another period of suffering and persecution to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Her worship was interdicted; her ministers who dared to perform any ministerial office were made liable to imprisonment or exile; her church courts were declared to be illegal; and her people, who refused to attend the services of the Establishment, were subjected to heavy fines. The discovery about this time of a conspiracy for the subversion of the government, known in history as the Blood Plot, unhappily furnished her enemies with a plea for increased severities. When the Restoration took place, the army was made up, for the most part, of Congregationalists and Anobaptists, and such of the officers and men as were believed to be still republicans at heart were quietly disbanded. This proceeding naturally gave great offence, and the dissatisfaction was increased not a little by Acts of Settlement and Explanation passed soon after, which conferred exceptional advantages on Episcopalian and Roman Catholics. The malcontents united in a secret confederacy to overthrow the government, and proposed to seize Dublin Castle, to make a prisoner of the Lord-Lieutenant, to put an end to the tyranny of the bishops, and to take steps for the suppression of popery. The plot was discovered on the eve of execution. Colonel Blood, the life and soul of the conspiracy, contrived to make his escape, but others who were deeply implicated, including a Presbyterian minister of the name of Lecky, and a brother-in-law of Blood, were captured and executed.

Earnest efforts were made to secure the co-operation of

the Presbyterians of Ulster in this unfortunate movement, but without success. Unhappily one or two of their ministers were not equally proof against seduction, and, in consequence, all the Presbyterian pastors of Down and Antrim incurred the suspicion of the Government, and an order for their arrest was immediately issued. Some of them suffered a tedious imprisonment, and others succeeded in escaping to Scotland.

The harsh measures that were now recklessly employed by the bishops to enforce uniformity of worship, and to crush the Presbyterians, betrayed a criminal disregard of the interests of true religion in Ireland. The total population of the kingdom, at the time, was about 1,100,000, of whom only 300,000 were Protestants. At least, one third of the Protestants were Scots, and, almost to a man, Presbyterians. In many quarters the religious destitution was deplorable. To enforce conformity to the established worship was greatly to increase the prevailing destitution ; for it deprived all the Scotch population and a large part of the English also, of the only religious ministrations they were willing to accept ; while, to enhance the absurdity, there were probably not a hundred Episcopally ordained clergymen in the whole island. Had the bishops been true shepherds, deeply concerned for the spiritual welfare of their flocks, they would have accepted with gratitude the services of the Presbyterian ministers who constituted by far the ablest and most zealous body of Protestant clergymen that were then in the kingdom. But, instead of pursuing a course so peculiarly desirable in the existing state of the country, they not only drove out of the Establishment the greater portion of its ablest and most successful ministers, but silenced them altogether, prohibiting them, under heavy penalties, from preaching or performing any ministerial duty among the thousands and tens of thousands who, in consequence, were left without

religious services. Meanwhile, Romish priests were labouring openly and without let or hindrance, diligently supplying the native population with spiritual ministrations, the lack of which in the Establishment, the bishops, in their anxiety to suppress Presbyterianism, seemed to be more in haste to increase than to diminish.

In the course of a few years, the Government, finding that the Presbyterians were not to be coerced into conformity, and dreading the discontent which intolerant measures were disseminating throughout a large and influential section of the community, began to adopt a milder and more lenient course. They restrained the Bishops' Courts from the odious practice of imposing heavy fines upon absentees from public worship, and released, from time to time, the ministers who had been imprisoned, some of them for the long term of six years. Other things, besides, led to their change of policy. A thorough investigation had made it clear that the Presbyterians as a body had no part in the Blood Plot; and, probably the King had not altogether forgotten their decided disapproval of the execution of his father and the important services they had rendered to himself in the part they had taken in his restoration to the throne. This change in the temper and policy of the Government was hailed with the liveliest satisfaction by both ministers and people. Hitherto, they had been obliged to use the utmost caution in meeting together for public worship, for, not only had such meetings been interdicted, but spies had been employed to watch their movements, and, if anything illegal was discovered, a report was immediately furnished to the nearest magistrate, who being, in almost every instance, the subservient tool of the bishops, was eager to inflict the heaviest penalty the law allowed. But now they felt encouraged to assemble more openly for public worship, especially as the return of those ministers

who had fled from the country, and the arrival of several others whom the fires of persecution had driven from Scotland, had added largely to the number of their preachers. In these altered circumstances, the church began to assume the more distinctly separate existence which she has since maintained. As early as 1668, houses of worship were erected in various districts, and in the following year several Presbyteries were organized. As it was not deemed prudent, in the existing state of affairs, to court public observation, instead of a Synod, a committee, composed of delegates from each of the Presbyteries, met privately from time to time, one of the first acts of which was to order a collection to be taken up in all the congregations of the church in aid of the ministers of Scotland who had fled for refuge from persecution to Holland. The Church had no legal security, however, for the continuance of the privileges, scanty as they were, with which she was now happily favoured. An over zealous and intolerant bishop might, at any moment, assert his episcopal authority, and set the fires of persecution burning afresh. As a matter of fact about this very time, Boyle, who succeeded Jeremy Taylor, as bishop of Down and Connor, in 1667, summoned twelve of the Presbyterian ministers, whose congregations lay within his diocese, to appear before him to answer for their non-conformity. Fortunately, the summons turned out to be but an impotent ebullition of Episcopal malignity. By the timely and powerful interposition of Sir Arthur Forbes—afterwards Earl Granard—always the warm and steadfast friend of the Presbyterians, the bishop was compelled, to drop the prosecution. Soon after, the same generous friend was able to render her a service of more lasting value. In 1672, being at the time one of the Lords-justices of the kingdom, he took the opportunity of a conference with the King to recommend her clergy to His Majesty's favour; and, in

consequence, the King was pleased to make them a grant of £1,200 a year, to be shared with the widows and orphans of the ministers who had been ejected at the Restoration. When the state of the Irish revenue, out of which the grant was to be paid, came to be ascertained exactly, it was found that only one half the sum was available, and the grant was accordingly fixed at that amount. This grant was the origin of the endowment, known as the Regium Donum, which the Irish Presbyterian Church enjoyed from this time onward, with a few interruptions, till the passing of "The Irish Church Act" in 1869, when the national church was dis-established, and all endowments of religion withdrawn.

This grant, small as it was, was exceedingly distasteful to the bishops, who, together with many others in high places, instead of showing the slightest favour to the Presbyterians were ready to embrace every opportunity of insulting and ill-using them. Their hostility towards them has been frequently made manifest in the course of this narrative. The following incident may serve to exhibit it in a slightly different aspect. A new theatre was erected in Dublin, in 1662, "unto which the bishops contributed largely, though at the time they refused to give countenance or assistance for building a church at Dame's St., where there was great need." During the Christmas holidays of 1670, a play was put on the boards, entitled, "The Non-conformist," intended to expose the Presbyterians to public derision. The chief character in the play was a Presbyterian minister, whom the inventive genius of the author had laboured to present in a caricature the best fitted to provoke the scorn and ridicule of the audience. But just as the merriment was at the highest, and the poor Presbyterian preacher, under the most laughable protests, was being placed in the stocks, the topmost gallery, crowded with spectators, suddenly gave way, carrying with it, in its

fall, the gallery below, both coming to the ground with a terrible crash, and heaping together, in one indistinguishable mass, the lords and ladies, and fine gentlemen, and clergy, who, but a moment ago, had been overwhelming a supposed Presbyterian minister with commingled shouts of laughter, derision and scorn. Many were killed on the spot; a larger number were seriously injured; some carried with them to their graves marks of the terrible catastrophe.

During the reign of Charles II., the most stringent measures were employed to force prelacy upon both England and Scotland. In the former country, five persons might not meet together for worship otherwise than the law prescribed; in the latter, not so much as family worship could be observed if only one person more than the family themselves was present. During a large part of the same reign, as already indicated, freedom of public worship was largely enjoyed in Ireland. In this period of comparative peace the Irish Presbyterian Church was favoured with a large measure of prosperity. Presbyteries proceeded steadily and cautiously to the settlement of ministers, not only in the north but also in several places in the south and west of the kingdom. The supply of ministers, though insufficient to meet all the wants of the field, was largely increased by the arrival, one after another, of ordained clergymen and licentiates of the Church of Scotland, who were driven by persecution from their own shores. The pastors who filled her pulpits were assiduous and faithful in a high degree in the discharge of their functions, and their abundant labours were greatly blessed. Every now and again, however, they were made to feel the force of prelatic hostility. Their marriages were often subjects of prosecution and censure in the ecclesiastical courts, and large numbers of their people were subjected to actions at law, and mulcted in heavy fines for refusing to attend on the Established worship. The battle of Bothwell

Bridge, Scotland, on the 22nd of June, 1679, unhappily awoke afresh the jealousy of the Government. Exaggerated reports that the Presbyterians of Ulster were ready to join in a similar insurrection were conveyed to the Lord-Lieutenant ; but the several Presbyteries were prompt to take steps to vindicate them from the aspersions of their enemies, and, happily, by a united declaration of loyalty and peaceableness, succeeded in removing the unfounded suspicions of the authorities.

In the beginning of the year, 1681, the Presbytery of Lagan resolved to hold a fast in all their congregations, and, as was usual in such cases, drew up a paper containing the causes of the proposed fast, which appears to have enkindled the resentment of the magistrates of the district. Legal proceedings were instituted against four members of the Presbytery, who were ultimately indicted at the summer assizes in Lifford for holding the fast, found guilty, and sentenced to pay a fine of £20 each, to subscribe an agreement not to offend in a similar manner again, and to be imprisoned till they should comply. They chose rather to suffer imprisonment than to enter into a sinful engagement. After eight months confinement in Lifford gaol, they were released by the sheriff, and the fines were afterwards remitted.

This violent proceeding encouraged the High Church party in Ulster to enter upon a fresh crusade against the Presbyterians. Their meeting-houses were closed ; their public worship was interdicted ; the penalties for refusing to conform were inflicted with unwonted severity in many districts ; Presbyteries were, once more, compelled to meet in private, and to exercise jurisdiction with the utmost caution and reserve. In these unfavourable circumstances, the greater number of the ministers of Derry and Donegal resolved to emigrate to America, in the hope of finding in the New World the free-

dom denied them in their own. But the death of Charles which occurred soon after, and the mitigation of the evils of their condition which followed prevented them from carrying out their resolution. Some of their number had already crossed the Atlantic. As early as 1668, mention is made of a young man from Ireland who laboured with much success in Maryland, in which, as well as in Virginia, many families from Ulster settled during the troubled decade between 1670 and 1680. In 1682, the Rev. W. Trail, a member of the Presbytery of Lagan, emigrated also to Maryland, and was followed some eight years afterwards by the Rev. Josias Makie. About the same time, the Rev. Samuel Davies settled in Delaware. But of all the ministers who about this time emigrated to America, the most noted was the Rev. Francis MacKemie, who was licensed by the Lagan Presbytery, in 1681, and appears to have crossed the Atlantic shortly after. He settled in Eastern Virginia, and died there in 1708. It would seem, however, that he did not confine his labours altogether to Virginia, for, it is related, that, in 1707, he was imprisoned in New York for preaching without the permission of the Governor, not escaping confinement till he had paid costs amounting to upwards of £80. In 1706, he organized the first Presbytery that was constituted on this continent, under the designation of the Presbytery of Philadelphia. It embraced seven clerical members, of whom two, besides himself, were Ulster men; shortly after its organization, four other Irishmen were added to its roll. To William Tennant, another Irishman, belongs the no less distinguished honour of being the father of Presbyterian Colleges in America. In 1726, he built, opposite his residence, a log hut in which to educate his four sons for the ministry. Other young men subsequently received their theological training in the same humble school of the prophets, of whom

three afterwards became presidents of the same institution, when it had ceased to be the log hut of Neshaminy, and had become the College of Princeton. The Synod of Ulster in 1754, gave it its imprimatur, and several of its wealthy members manifested their interest in its welfare by transmitting the sum of £500 to aid it in its work. In 1718, Mr. McGregor, minister of Aghadoey, with a number of his people emigrated to New Hampshire, where they founded a city which they called Londonderry, in loving remembrance of the county they had left.

CHAPTER IX.

FREEDOM'S BATTLE.

Death of Charles II—His character—Succession of James II—Attempts to restore Romanism as the National religion—Declaration for Liberty of Conscience—Situation of affairs increasingly alarming—Protestants unite—Seige of Derry—Particulars of—Relief.

C HARLES II. died in 1685, and was succeeded on the throne by his brother, James II., who was formally proclaimed King on the 11th of February of the same year. During his whole reign, Charles was at heart a Papist. Prior to the Restoration he was privately received into the Church of Rome, Peter Talbot, afterwards Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, officiating on the occasion of his admission ; but it was not till he came to die that he threw off the mask and received absolution from a Romish priest. For many years, he was in secret alliance with France, from whose King he was base enough to accept an annual pension of £200,000 for the concealed purposes of establishing Popery and arbitrary power. Rochester's epigrammatic jest that “he never said a foolish thing, and never did a wise one” supplies a tolerably correct index to his general character.

James was openly and avowedly a Romanist, and, on his accession to the throne, speedily made it manifest that he was prepared to stretch his royal prerogative to the utmost for the purpose of overthrowing the Protestant religion and establishing Popery in its stead as the national religion. In a letter to the Pope he declared, that it was his determination “to spread the Catholic faith, not only in his three kingdoms, but over all the dispersed colonies of his subjects

in America." His plans for the accomplishment of his object in its relation to Ireland soon began to be put into execution. The Lords-justices were removed from office, and the government of the kingdom placed in the hands of his brother-in-law, Lord Clarendon, who, though a Protestant, was expected to be, from his relationship to himself, thoroughly obedient to his wishes. As bishops' Sees fell vacant, no new appointments were made, and their revenues were directed to be paid into the treasury to create a fund for the endowment of the Romish hierarchy. The militia, which was composed exclusively of Protestants, was disarmed. Colonel Talbot, commonly called "Lying Dick Talbot," a bigoted Romanist and a worthless profligate, was placed at the head of the army with absolute power of command. This uncontrolled authority Talbot speedily exercised in a manner in keeping with his well-known character. Every regiment was remodelled; Protestants were set aside, and Romanists put in their place. These arbitrary proceedings naturally filled the Protestants with alarm, which was speedily increased by the recall of Lord Clarendon, who had not been found to be sufficiently submissive, and by the appointment of Talbot, recently created Earl of Tyrconnell, to succeed him. The new Viceroy was in haste to push forward the Romanizing process that had already been begun. The magistracy, the bench, every corporation throughout the kingdom, was remodelled, and every office of importance in the country assigned to Romanists. Romish priests were encouraged to appropriate the tithes of the parishes in which they officiated; funds set apart for a sound Protestant education were employed in supporting Popish seminaries; Protestant clergymen were forbidden to discuss controversial topics in the pulpit, and the strongest inducements were held out to them to conform to the favoured church.

For the purpose of conciliating Presbyterians and Dissenters and of dividing and so weakening the Protestant interest, in April, 1687, James published his celebrated "Declaration for Liberty of Conscience," suspending, by virtue of his royal authority the execution of all the penal laws that had been framed to enforce conformity to the national church, and prohibiting the imposition of religious tests as qualifications for office. This step, though unconstitutional, brought seasonable relief to the Presbyterians, who did not hesitate to avail themselves of the liberty it conferred. Their places of worship that had been closed for the last five years were re-opened ; Presbytery meetings were publicly held, and all ecclesiastical functions were openly performed. The advantages, however, that the Declaration conferred, did not blind them to its true import. They did not fail to discern that it was simply intended to pave the way for the complete establishment of Romanism throughout the kingdom, when all the privileges it conferred upon themselves would be incontinently withdrawn. It was in vain, therefore, that the Viceroy and the friends of the court endeavoured to unite them in an address to the Crown, expressive of thankfulness for the royal clemency. When they looked around them, and saw every office of importance in the country transferred to Romanists, and an army, composed almost exclusively of adherents of the same communion, under daily and careful training to a higher state of efficiency, and occupying every post of vantage in the kingdom, they would have been fools indeed if they had yielded to the blandishments of their wily adversaries, and been betrayed into an open expression of approval of a measure that, whatever may have been its apparent excellence, was really a step towards the speedy overthrow of all that they held in deepest veneration.

During the year 1688, the situation became daily more

alarming. Romanism, like the returning tide, was gradually but surely nearing its ancient landmarks, and its adherents were exulting in the prospect of its coming triumph. Protestants were not only disarmed and deprived of all political power, but subjected to countless indignities and hardships for which they sought redress in vain. In these discouraging circumstances, which they justly regarded as the certain precursors, of more serious troubles, they fled in great numbers either to England or to Scotland. It is said that when Lord Clarendon took his departure from Dublin, no less than 1500 of the Protestant families of the city left at the same time.

In this hour of peril, when the entire Protestantism of the country was threatened with extinction, the Presbyterians, forgetting all the ill-usage they had endured at the hands of the Episcopalians, cordially united with them in a bold and determined effort to save themsslvess and their common faith from impending ruin. Nor were they without encouragement to hope that hearty and sustained co-operation would ultimately avert the threatened danger. Certainly it soon became apparent that it was likely, at no distant date, to receive effective support. As the year drew near to its close, tidings reached them that the Prince of Orange had landed in England, on the 4th of November, and that the avowed object of his coming was to maintain the Protestant religion and the liberties of the kingdom. By none was the intelligence more cordially received than by the Presbyterians. As soon as it reached them they despatched one of the more influential of their number to wait on His Highness, to tender to him in their name the heartiest welcome, to lay before him the dangers to which they were exposed, with a request that he would have a care for their relief, and "to

represent their readiness to serve him and his interest as far as they may have access."

The gentleman who consented to undertake this important but dangerous mission had scarcely set out on his journey, when an incident occurred that greatly increased the general alarm and constrained the Protestants of Ulster to take active measures for their common safety. On Monday, the 3rd of December, an anonymous letter, evidently written by a person of very limited education, was found lying in the streets of Comber, a small town in County Down, addressed to the Earl of Mount-Alexander, a Protestant nobleman of the neighbourhood, warning his Lordship that a general massacre of the Protestants had been planned by the Irish, to commence the following Sunday. Similar letters were addressed to others in different parts of the Province. In a time of confirmed peace and security, this missive would have attracted hardly any notice ; but in the excitement and uneasiness that recent events had created it gave rise to the most alarming apprehensions. A repetition of the atrocities of '41, the memory of which was still fresh in the minds of thousands, seemed to be near at hand. Copies of the letter were sent forthwith to the Capital, and to Derry, and other towns in Ulster. It reached Derry on the morning of Friday, the 7th day of December, and the consternation that it produced was greatly increased by the arrival at the same time of intelligence that a regiment composed exclusively of Romanists and commanded by Lord Antrim, a Roman Catholic nobleman, whose brother had taken part in the worst atrocities of the late rebellion, was on its march to the city, and might be expected at any moment. During the previous fortnight, Derry had been without a garrison, the regiment that had been quartered there having been recalled to Dublin, to supply the places of troops that had been despatched to

England to assist the King against the Prince of Orange. Antrim's Redshanks were sent to occupy the vacant post, and as they were all Romanists, it was inferred that they were coming to take part in the apprehended massacre. The little city was in a state of the greatest agitation. The question whether the approaching regiment should be allowed admittance was everywhere eagerly discussed. The prevailing opinion seemed to be that it should be excluded, for, it was felt that if there was to be a general uprising of the Irish, it was of the utmost importance that a place of such strength should be in the hands of the Protestant party. Ezekiel Hopkins, the Protestant bishop, and the majority of the Episcopal clergy held by the doctrine of the divine right of kings and non-resistance, and strongly opposed such a bold measure, but the Rev. James Gordon, Presbyterian minister of an adjoining parish, strongly urged its adoption. At the very last moment, when the approaching force was already in sight, and when the authorities seemed to be incapable of coming to a decision, several young men of the city, probably all of them Presbyterians, rushed boldly forward, seized the keys, and closed the gates, in the face of the King's troops. Antrim's men, struck with astonishment at this bold and unexpected movement, seemed at a loss to know what to do. To aid their wavering decision, James Morrison, one of the citizens cried out in tones loud enough to reach their ears, "Bring hither one of the great guns." The hint was enough. Off they ran with a rush, scampering down the hill like a flock of sheep before a mastiff, each seeking to outstrip his neighbour in his efforts to escape beyond the reach of danger. After lingering two days at the Waterside, in the immediate neighbourhood of the city, they took their departure, and made their way to Carrickfergus. Their leaving was hastened by an incident of an exceedingly ludicrous character. George

Cooke, a butcher, had drawn up, probably for his own amusement, a squad of fifty or sixty boys, at the Ferry quay, and soon after, a party of thirty horsemen appeared on the Glendermot hills. Though neither party had any hostile intention, the valorous soldiery saw danger at hand, and fled as precipitately as if a whole legion of veterans was at their heels, some without their horses, and some without their baggage. One gallant officer ran away in his stocking-soles.

The rashness and impetuosity of youth are but poor guides in a great crisis. Perhaps a little reflection may open the eyes of the young men and of the citizens who support them to see the temerity and danger of what has been hastily done. So reasoned Bishop Hopkins, whose reverence for kingly authority rendered him insensible to the higher claims of religion and liberty. Accordingly, he goes down to the Diamond, and makes a speech in which he employs the whole force of his Episcopal eloquence to persuade them to open the gates. But all in vain. "My Lord," said young Irwin, speaking from the crowd, "Your doctrine is good, but we can't hear you out." Some of the more cautious and timid of the citizens sided with the bishop, but the general verdict is in favour of the young men. The gates are closed, and closed they must remain. Better die in honourable warfare than be butchered by Antrim's Redshanks. Preparations are begun for backing up the action taken. The citizens capable of bearing arms are divided into six companies, with a captain, a lieutenant and an ensign appointed over each. Such arms and ammunition as are available are served out. Letters are sent to various parts of the country, stating what had been done and asking for assistance. One gentleman goes to England to procure, if possible,

a further supply of arms and ammunition. The next day the bishop found it convenient to leave the city, and, strange to say, the city never had reason to regret his departure.

The names of the gallant young men who closed the gates of the Maiden City, deserve to be held in everlasting remembrance by Irish Protestants everywhere, and by all who prize British freedom. They were :—Henry Campsie, William Cruickshanks, Robert Sherrard, Daniel Sherrard, Alexander Irwin, James Stewart, Robert Morrison, Alexander Cunningham, Samuel Hunt, James Spike, John Cunningham, William Cairns and Samuel Harvey. The deed that will shed a glory over their names for all time was the result of a sudden and apparently unimportant impulse, but results of stupendous significance hung suspended on the issue. The fate of the three kingdoms was at stake. Had the gates of Derry been opened to receive a Popish garrison, the armies of James would have been in possession of the whole of Ulster, and from thence would have easily passed into Scotland, where, uniting with the forces of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, they would have made an easy conquest of that kingdom, crossing the border afterwards in such accumulated strength as would have rendered the conquest of England hardly less certain. But the gallant action of this noble band of patriotic youths effectually barred the way to the execution of such disastrous movements; in the issue destroyed all hope of Popish ascendancy, and placed the religion and liberties of the British Empire on a foundation that remains firm to this hour, and that, we trust, will remain firm as the foundations that support the everlasting hills till time shall be no more.

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The inhabitants of Enniskillen, the only other fortified place in the north-west of the province, were not slow to

imitate the example set them by the men of Derry. They had received similar warning, and they resolved to shut their gates against the Romish troops Tyrconnell had despatched to occupy their garrison. They even outstripped the men of Derry in the ardour of their heroic zeal, for, instead of allowing the Romish detachments to approach their gates they boldly attacked them on their march to the town, and completely routed them. In these decisive steps they were especially encouraged by the Rev. Robert Kelso, Presbyterian minister of the place, who, like the rest of his brethren throughout Ulster, "laboured both publicly and privately in animating his hearers to take up arms and stand upon their own defence, showing example himself by bearing arms and marching at the head of them when together."

Though the 9th of December passed without any uprising of the Irish, the Protestants throughout Ulster felt the necessity of continuing their defensive preparations. It was evident that a great and decisive struggle was at hand. Tyrconnell was daily levying troops. Romanists everywhere were secretly providing themselves with arms ; even the priests were procuring military implements ; a spirit of boastful exultation was abroad ; Ireland would soon be in the hands of its own children, and not a Protestant would be left to profane the soil. There was urgent need, therefore, that the Protestants should immediately take measures for their common defence. The several counties formed themselves into Protestant associations ; these associations elected councils of war, and a general for each county ; these several councils again were formed into a general council, with its seat at Hillsborough, in County Down.

One of the first acts of the General Council was to despatch one of their number with an address to the Prince of Orange, informing him of their dangerous situation, and the measures they had taken for their safety, and assuring him

of their devotion to his cause. Shortly afterwards, a committee representing the several Presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church met, and commissioned two of its members to convey a similar address to the Prince, and "to lay the desires of the Ulster Presbyterians before the English Convention then about to meet." In about two months after his departure, the messenger of the General Council returned with an answer to their address in which the Prince expressed approval of their conduct, and promised them speedy and effectual support. About the same time the forces the general council had been able to put into the field came for the first time into collision with the King's army. To enter into a detailed statement of the military movements that followed is not our intention. Suffice it to say that the Protestant forces, after displaying the valour that might be expected from men who were fighting for their altars and their homes, were obliged to retire before an army immensely superior in number, equipment, and training, and ultimately to seek refuge within the walls of Derry, the heroic defence of which now claims our attention.

When the Viceroy learned that the inhabitants of Derry had shut its gates against the King's troops, he was greatly incensed, and, as was his wont in times of great passion, he flung his wig into the fire. He had sense enough, however, to know that something more than burning wigs was needed to reduce the refractory inhabitants of Derry to submission. Accordingly, he instantly despatched Lord Mountjoy and Colonel Lundy with six companies of their regiment, to go down to the rebellious city and enforce its obedience. Lord Mountjoy was one of the few Protestants who still held command in the army. He was personally acquainted with the citizens of Derry, for he had resided in the city for a length of time as commander of the regiment that had been

but recently recalled to Dublin. Unwilling to proceed to extremities against his co-religionists, and learning that they were disposed to come to terms he left his men at Omagh, and proceeded alone to Derry, in the hope of arranging a pacific settlement. This was easily done, as both parties were desirous of avoiding bloodshed. It was agreed that Lord Mountjoy, on his part, should procure from the Lord-Deputy a free pardon for all who had been concerned in shutting the gates, that the city should admit two companies of his regiment, consisting exclusively of Protestants, and that the town companies, recently organized, should retain their arms, and do duty with the others.

In accordance with this agreement, two companies of Lord Mountjoy's regiment, under command of Lieutenant-Colonel Lundy, a Protestant Episcopalian from the neighborhood of Dumbarton, were admitted within the walls. It was in this way that Lundy came to be military governor of the city.

When Lundy became Governor of Derry he held the position in the name of King James. As yet, the citizens had not openly declared for the Prince of Orange, but were eagerly watching the evolution of events, and ready to take that important step the moment the progress of affairs in England opened the way. They had already placed themselves in communication with the Prince, and, in answer to their pressing application, were cheered by the arrival, on the 21st of March [1689], of 8,000 stand of arms, 480 barrels of powder, and £595 in money. Along with these seasonable supplies came a commission for Colonel Lundy investing him with the supreme command, which was to be given to him upon his taking the oath of fidelity to King William. Lundy took the required oath without hesitation, as did all the officers, both civil and military, in the town and garrison, and on the following day, March

22nd, William and Mary were proclaimed amid the wildest demonstrations of joy and gladness. The day after, a trustworthy citizen was sent to England with an address to King William, and with a request for further supplies. This request received immediate attention ; ships with two regiments on board were at once ordered to Derry ; but when they arrived, Lundy added to treachery of which he had been guilty on several former occasions by refusing to allow the soldiers to land, on the plea that the place was untenable, and that, even if it were tenable, the provision stores would not last for a week. They sailed away and left Derry to its fate ; Lundy, meanwhile, was preparing to surrender the town to King James, but when his scheme was ripe for execution, it was happily defeated by the timely intervention of a gallant Presbyterian officer, Adam Murray, a descendant of one of the Murrays of Philiphaugh, Scotland, who had already rendered important service to the Protestant cause, and who was hereafter to play a part so conspicuous in the defence of the city as to be justly entitled to be forever after regarded as the Hero of the siege. The guilty traitor, fearing the vengeance of the citizens whom he had sought to betray, escaped out of the city disguised as a private soldier with a load of matchwood on his back, and succeeded in reaching Scotland. Some months after, he was committed to the Tower of London for his conduct, and, finally, after careful enquiry by the authorities, was dismissed from His Majesty's service.

The treachery and flight of Lundy left the city without a governor. Captain Murray would have been unanimously chosen to the responsible post, but, on his declining the honour, the choice fell on Major Baker. When Major Baker died some time afterwards, Colonel Mitchellburn became his successor. The Rev. George Walker, an Episco-

pal clergyman, was chosen as assistant governor, and placed in charge of the provision stores.

Meanwhile King James himself appeared on the scene. "Having obtained at last the promised assistance from France, he landed at Kinsale on the 12th of March, bringing with him 5,000 French troops, under Marshal Rosen, several hundred officers for the Irish regiments, cannon, ammunition, and arms for 40,000 men. He passed through Dublin on the 24th, when writs were issued for a parliament, and on the 8th of April, he set out for Ulster, at the head of twelve thousand men, and a considerable train of artillery, intending to return and open the Session in May, when the Ulster troubles should have been put down." He arrived at St. Johnston, within five miles of Derry, on the 18th, and, as the city declined, contrary to his expectations to throw open its gates to receive him, he immediately placed it in a state of blockade. The memorable siege that followed now commenced. The gates were closed, it will be remembered, on the 7th of the previous December.

Nearly a thousand non-combatants, chiefly old men, women, and children, voluntarily left the city, now that hostilities were about to begin. When the gates were closed in December, 1688, there were only 300 fighting men within the walls; now this small force had increased to fully 7,000, among a total population of 20,000, chiefly refugees from the Counties of Down, Antrim, Derry, and Tyrone. The officers of the higher grades were about equally divided between the Episcopalians and the Presbyterians, but those of the lower grades were chiefly Presbyterians. Among the common soldiers, the Presbyterians were fifteen to one. Seventeen Episcopal and eight Presbyterian clergymen remained in the city. The cathedral, which was the only place of worship within the walls, was used by both parties

in common ; the Episcopalians occupied it in the forenoon, and the Presbyterians in the afternoon of every Sabbath. "In the cathedral, in the forenoon when the conformists preached, there was but comparatively a thin attendance ; in the afternoon, it was very full, and there were four or five meetings of the Presbyterians in the town besides."

The defence of Derry ranks as one of the most heroic struggles the annals of the world record. "Deserted by the English regiments, betrayed by their own commander, without stores and half armed, the shopkeepers and apprentices of a commercial town," reinforced by farmers from the surrounding country, successfully "defended an unfortified city against a disciplined army of 25,000 men, led by trained officers, and amply provided with artillery."

As the siege proceeded, the defenders of the city were cheered by repeated successes. In the very first sally that was made by the garrison, a small force of five hundred men succeeded in taking a standard and some spoil, and inflicting upon the enemy a loss which was estimated at two hundred, including several officers of note, and, among them, Maumont, the French General, who was slain by Colonel Murray in a hand to hand encounter. At no time did the besiegers obtain a decisive advantage ; and if only food and ammunition should hold out, the garrison became increasingly confident of their ability to maintain their position. The enemy seemed to have, at length, reached the same conviction. Towards the end of June, Rosen, who was supreme in command at the time, had recourse to a stratagem that showed that he had abandoned the hope of taking the city by force of arms. By a letter enclosed in an empty shell that he ordered to be thrown into the city, he informed the garrison that, unless they surrendered on or before the first of July, he would gather all the Protestants that had remained at their homes, between Charlemont and the sea, old men, women, and chil-

dren, and drive them under the walls, and leave them there to starve to death. The garrison at first regarded the threat as a mere pretence intended to intimidate them into surrendering; but they were soon undeceived. On the morning of the second of July, they saw, to their consternation, a motley crowd of their own parents, and wives, and sisters, and children, and friends, to the number of twelve hundred, approaching the city, driven by a squad of brutal soldiers. The situation was embarrassing in the extreme. To admit so large a number of helpless and dependent people meant the surrender of the city in a few days for want of food; not to admit them meant to see them die a painful and lingering death in their very presence. It is hardly possible, in these days, to form an adequate conception of the intense horror with which the Protestant population of Ulster, at this time, justly looked upon Romanism. The memory of '41 had burned itself into the hearts of the people universally, and the worst fate was preferred to a surrender to its clemency. The poor people outside the walls were in the hands of enemies whom they regarded as blood-thirsty savages and expected no mercy; but they were not prepared to see their friends in the city placed in the same perilous position. Rather than that, they are willing to die one by one, inch by inch. With a heroism unmatched even in the city itself they implore the garrison not for a moment to think of surrender out of pity for them. Their loss, should everyone of them perish at once, can, in no wise, affect the great struggle at issue; let the city but continue to sustain with unyielding endurance the position it has taken, and the Protestant religion may yet be preserved from extermination, and Ulster may still continue to be the home of a loyal Protestant population.

Though the garrison declined to open the gates to the admission of their friends without in accordance

with their own wishes and entreaties, they yet could not allow them to perish without making an effort to save them. The Governor and officers immediately ordered a gallows to be erected on the Double Bastion, situated at the south-west corner of the walls, in sight of the enemy's camp, and commanded all the prisoners in their hands to prepare for instant death. These prisoners had hitherto been treated with all possible kindness and consideration, but they were now assured that unless the starving multitude outside the walls were immediately allowed to return unmolested to their homes, not one of them would escape the hangman's rope. The expedient proved successful. Rosen, informed of the determination of the garrison, ultimately yet reluctantly relented, and, on Wednesday, the poor people were not only released from their miserable plight, but supplied with provisions and money for the homeward journey.

Meanwhile hunger and disease had begun to decimate the ranks of the besieged, yet none spoke, none thought of surrender. Let us die in the last ditch, rather than that, was the universal cry. As July wore on, the situation became daily more and more distressing. On the 8th of the month, "the garrison was reduced, chiefly from hunger and disease, to 5,520 men, and, on that day, there was distributed to each man from the provision stores, a pound of meal, a pound of tallow, and two pounds of aniseed. The meal was mixed with the tallow, and to the mixture was added ginger, pepper, or aniseed ; and the whole was made into pancakes, which proved no despicable fare, especially when no better could be obtained." As the days wore away, even food of this kind could only be had in diminishing quantities. Towards the end of the month it was not to be had, either for love or money. Dogs, rats, the most loathsome vermin came to be dainties, and hides and shoe-leather were the

ordinary fare. Multitudes were dying daily of famine and of diseases generated by unwholesome food. Yet dreadful as the situation was, the city continued to be defended with the utmost gallantry. Every attack was successfully repelled, and the breaches made in the walls by day were repaired by night with incredible activity. It seemed that by some mysterious agency the enthusiasm of the hour was able to dominate the body in the time of action, and to convert walking skeletons into most agile and fearless soldiers. "I could not," says John Hunter, of Maghera, who served as a common soldier throughout the siege, "I could not get a drink of clear water, and suffered heavily from thirst, and was so distressed by hunger that I could have eaten any vermin, but could not get it. Yea, there was nothing that was any kind of flesh or food that I would not have eaten, if I had it. . . . Oh ! none will believe but those who have found it by experience, what some poor creatures suffered in that siege. There were many who had been curious respecting what they put into their mouths before they came to the siege of Londonderry, who, before that siege was ended, would have eaten what a dog would not eat—for they would have eaten a dead dog, and be very glad to get it ; and one dog will hardly eat another. I speak from woeful experience, for I myself would have eaten the poorest cat or dog I ever saw with my eyes. The famine was so great that many a man, woman, and child, died for want of food. I myself was so weak from hunger, that I fell under my musket one morning as I was going to the walls ; yet God gave me strength to continue all night at my post there, and enabled me to act the part of a soldier, as if I had been as strong as ever I was ; yet my face was blackened with hunger. I was so hard put to it by reason of the want of food that I had hardly any heart to speak or walk ; and yet when the enemy was coming, as many a time they did, to storm the

walls, then I found as if my former strength returned to me. I am sure it was the Lord that kept the city, and none else ; for there were many of us that could hardly stand on our feet before the enemy attacked the walls who, when they were assaulting the out trenches, ran out against them most nimbly and with great courage. Indeed, it was never the poor starved men that were in Derry that kept it out, but the mighty God of Jacob, to whom be praise for ever and ever."

Deep and dreadful as was the distress that prevailed throughout the beleaguered and famished city, it was made deeper and more unbearable still by the knowledge that there lay at only a few miles distance ample means of relief that it required no great energy or daring to make available. The Government of William was thoroughly alive to the importance of rendering all possible assistance to a city that was making such heroic efforts to establish its authority in Ireland. As early as June, several ships of war, carrying three regiments of foot, with vessels laden with ammunition and provisions, under the command of Major General Kirke, sent from England for the relief of the garrison, anchored in Lough Foyle, within sight of the city. Unfortunately the person entrusted with the command proved to be unfit for the position. When the expedition he commanded first cast anchor in the Lough, it would have been comparatively easy to have reached the city ; and, though the enemy, as might be expected, eagerly embraced the opportunity his criminal delay furnished to render the passage up to the city as difficult and dangerous as possible by throwing across the river a boom made of beams of fir, clamped with iron, and bound round with great cables twelve inches thick, and by the construction of a formidable fort on each side of the river at its narrowest, at no time were the obstacles insur-

mountable to the skilled daring of a competent and intrepid commander. The sequel made this clear, for, when, at length, the attempt was made to force a passage to the city, it was accomplished with no great difficulty. For seven weeks, the fleet, the tall masts of which could be seen from the tower of the cathedral, lay inactive whilst the brave defenders of the city were enduring unparalleled privations and sufferings that it only required a bold movement to terminate in a few hours. These seven weeks might have stretched into twice seven, compelling the city to surrender from the want of living men to man its walls, had it not been that the Rev. James Gordon, the same Presbyterian clergyman who had counselled the closing of the gates in face of the Redshanks, contrived to procure an interview with Kirke, and to induce him to resolve on the passage of the river.

It was the morning of Sabbath, the 28th of July, 1689. The sun rose in splendour. The sky overhead soon became radiant with his brightness, and poured down a flood of glory that contrasted strangely with the gloom that overshadowed the suffering city. The hearts of its gallant defenders were filled with the gloomiest apprehensions. It seemed at last that all their heroic struggles, maintained through long weary weeks of privation and suffering, must end in failure. Unless relief comes at once they cannot hold out a day longer. In their dire extremity they make another attempt to attract Kirke's attention by firing several shots from the flat roof of the cathedral, and by lowering a flag to intimate their distressing condition. For the first time their signals are answered by the fire of six great guns; and as the welcome sound comes booming up the river, to their intense delight, they behold a commotion in the fleet below. As they strain their eyes in eager and anxious gaze along the river and away out to the Lough,

they behold, to their yet deeper joy, four vessels detach themselves from the rest of the fleet, and turn in their direction. One of the four vessels, the *Dartmouth*, was a frigate, commanded by Captain Leaske; the other three were provision ships. On move the gallant ships, the frigate in advance. A formidable fort on the left bank of the river safely passed, the frigate casts anchor, whilst two of the provision ships that she had sheltered from the fire of the fort move on, attended by a long boat "well barricaded and armed with seamen to cut the boom," the tide in their favour but the wind sinking to a calm as evening drew nigh. The first of the vessels to strike the boom rebounds from the shock and runs aground. The enemy, who lined both shores in immense numbers, ply the stranded vessel incessantly with guns, big and little, and, certain of her capture, raise a shout of exultation. Meanwhile, the crew of the long boat are busy hewing and hacking away at the boom with hatchets and cutlasses. Nor is the stranded vessel idle. Discharging all her guns simultaneously on the landward side, the rebound sends her again in an instant into deep water. Rejoicing in her recovered freedom, she proudly and defiantly moves forward, rushes upon the boom, and dashing through the opposing obstacle as if it were a thread of gossamer, followed quickly by her companion, gallantly ploughs her way towards the famishing city. By ten o'clock in the evening of that memorable Sabbath, the two vessels cast anchor alongside the little quay that stretched out into the river at Ship-quay gate. No language could describe, no arithmetic calculate the joy that filled the hearts and lighted up the wan and wasted features of the thousands that yet survived in Derry in this hour of triumph. During the entire day, they had watched with feverish anxiety the movements of the relieving vessels, their hopes and fears

alternately prevailing ; but now their fears are all gone, and their best hopes more than realized, the long weary weeks of privation and suffering are ended ; the gloom that overshadowed their bosoms when the day began has sunk in an ocean of joy at its close ; the great object for which they had struggled with heroic fortitude is accomplished ; Derry is saved, and with it the religion and liberties of their country.

With the relief of Derry, the enemy lost all hope of capturing the city. On the following Monday and Tuesday they continued the attack, but on Wednesday they took their departure in full retreat for Dublin. On the same day, the brave Enniskilleners won one of the most brilliant victories of the whole war, routing at Newtonbutler an army of six thousand with a force hardly the one-third of their numbers, slaying two thousand, and taking between four and five hundred prisoners, including the General and numerous inferior officers.

Nothing did so much damage to the city as the bombs which were cast into it night and day. These dreaded missiles, some of which weighed over 270 pounds and carried 16 pounds of powder, exploding as they fell, played havoc with everything in their immediate neighbourhood, slaying men, ploughing up streets, knocking down houses. One fell in the churchyard, turning five corpses out of their graves, and throwing one of them over the surrounding wall. Eighty only of the garrison were killed in battle ; but the mortality by wounds, exposure, hunger, and disease, was immeasurably greater. When the siege closed, the 7,000 men, who formed the garrison when it began, were reduced to 4,300, of whom only one-fourth was fit for service. The mortality among the non-combatants was greater still, for, in the 105 days during which the siege lasted, there perished in the city ten thousand persons.

When Derry was relieved almost the whole of Ireland was in the possession of the Jacobite forces. In the north, Enniskillen and the Maiden City were the only places of importance in the hands of the Williamites. Happily, this state of things was not to be of long continuance. On Monday, the 13th of August, a fleet from England of nearly one hundred sail, with ten thousand horse and foot, under the command of Duke Schomberg, anchored in Bangor Bay, on the coast of County Down. In less than a fortnight afterwards, almost the whole of Ulster was recovered; Charlemont was the only place in the province that continued to hold a Jacobite garrison. Still greater events were close at hand. William himself was about to take part in the struggle. By birth, and education, and profession a Presbyterian, he sympathized strongly with the suffering Protestants of Ireland, and took the earliest opportunity of going in person to their relief. He had landed in England on the 5th of November, 1688; he had entered St. James's Palace, London, on the 18th of the following December; and now he was about to go to Ireland to claim and enforce his sovereignty over that part of the Empire. He set out on his high mission in June, accompanied by a fleet of nearly 700 vessels, and landed at Carrickfergus, on the 14th of the month. The stone on which he first set foot is still pointed out as an enduring memorial of the event. As he went, to use his own expression, "not to let the grass grow under his feet," he proceeded to Belfast the very day he landed, where he received a deputation of Presbyterian ministers who presented him with a loyal address. The next day found him at Hillsborough, where he issued the celebrated order to Christopher Carleton, Collector of Customs at Belfast, authorizing him to pay £1,200 per annum, to the ministers of the Presbyterian Church, "being assured," as he said, "of their constant labour to unite the

hearts of others in their zeal and loyalty towards us." From Hillsborough he proceeded to Loughbrickland, where he joined his army, now amounting to 36,000 men. Moving southward, he reached the banks of the Boyne, on the 30th of June, and, on the following day, Sunday, the first of July, old style, he encountered the Irish army with King James at its head, and fought the memorable battle which will be known throughout all time as the event that placed the Protestant interest of the three kingdoms on a firm and secure foundation. Still moving southward, he reached Dublin, on the following Saturday, to learn on his arrival that James, despairing of success in Ireland, had fled to France. On the Monday after he was presented with an address by the Episcopal clergy, who, with an easy versatility that was strongly suggestive of gross want of principle and shameless time-serving, presented him with an address brimful of the most ardent loyalty, though a few days before they had approached King James with no less fervent expressions of devotion to his person and cause.

William did not remain long in the Capital. Still moving southward and marching by Kilkenny he took possession of Waterford. From thence he proceeded to Limerick, the chief Jacobite stronghold in the south. Encountering here a more serious and lengthened opposition than he anticipated, he raised the siege on the last day of August, and returned to England, leaving the army in the command of Baron Ginkell, and entrusting the government of the country to three Lords-justices, one of whom, Thomas Coningsby, had stood by him at the Boyne, and staunched a wound he received, when, in preparation for the battle, he was reconnoitering the enemy's position. Ginkell, having received large reinforcements, took the field early in the following summer. In a short time he reduced Athlone, and, on the 12th of July, fought the battle that gave the final over-

throw to the Jacobite power in Ireland. The Irish had concentrated their forces on the hill of Aghrim, five miles from Ballinasloe, in the County of Galway, determined to make a last bold stand for their nationality. They were commanded by Saint Ruth, a distinguished French general, and an ardent Romanist. Every means that could arouse their religious enthusiasm and warlike ardour was employed. The battle was keenly contested on both sides. Once Saint Ruth deemed the day his own, but in the very moment of his premature exultation, a cannon ball struck his head from his shoulders. The Irish, discouraged and disconcerted by the fall of their commander, lost heart and fled in disorder and dismay, leaving 7,000 of their number dead on the battle-field. With the surrender of Limerick, which speedily followed, the last act in the drama was played ; James's power in Ireland was completely extinguished, William's sovereignty universally established, and Ireland laid a second time a conquered country at the feet of England.

James stayed but a short time with his army before Derry. Accompanied by Rosen he left the camp for Dublin, and on the 29th of April reached the Capital where he had summoned a parliament to meet him on the 7th of May. Every effort had been made to secure the return of members thoroughly devoted to Jacobite interests. This was accomplished without much difficulty as the country was almost entirely in the hands of the Romanists who did not hesitate to resort to the most arbitrary proceedings. Of the thirty-six members who attended the House of Lords, only nine were Protestants —four bishops and five peers. The House of Commons was still more decidedly Ronish : of the two hundred and thirty members who were sent up only six were Protestants. The general tenor of the legislation that followed may be easily anticipated. The authority of the English parliament as the Supreme Court of Appeal was abrogated. The Acts of Settlement and Explanation were repealed,

and most of the landed property of the country transferred from Protestant to Romish proprietors ; the greater part of the tithes was taken from the Protestant and given to the Romish clergy ; between two and three thousand persons, including peers, baronets, knights, clergy, gentry, and yeomanry, were declared guilty of high treason, unless they surrendered within a certain assigned period. At the same time, James, to supply his empty coffers with money, had the basest metals coined into current coin of the realm, the acceptance of which, at its nominal value, was enforced by severe pains and penalties.

From the beginning of the year 1687, when James's declaration for liberty of worship was published, the ministers of the Presbyterian Church suffered no molestation from the High Church party, who felt the necessity of laying aside ecclesiastical differences and uniting with their Presbyterian brethren for mutual defence and for the protection of their common Protestantism. Episcopalian and Presbyterian joined hands, and moved shoulder to shoulder in hearty and earnest co-operation ; and it is to their cordial union and close alliance that the present free protestant institutions of the country are largely due.

During the commotions which existed all over Ulster in the winter of 1688 and the following summer, the churches and the country suffered greatly. The people were scattered far and wide, and those of them that still clung to their homes were reduced to a condition bordering on beggary. In many districts the houses were in ruins and the fields lay untilled. The churches, for the most part, were either burned or pulled down, and public worship almost entirely suspended. The ministers of the Presbyterian Church, being peculiarly obnoxious to the Romish authorities on account of their declared sympathy with the cause of William, were, in many

instances, obliged to abandon their congregations and to flee to Scotland, where, as on several former occasions, they found a cordial welcome and a safe asylum. But from the time that Schomberg landed at Carrickfergus, tranquillity was, in a great measure, restored, and, in consequence, the country began to assume a more pleasing aspect. Deserted and plundered homes were re-occupied ; houses and church edifices that had been laid in ruins were rebuilt, public worship was re-established ; the ordinary pursuits of life were resumed ; the unreaped harvests were gathered in, and an air of rejoicing hopefulness spread over the land. The Presbyterian Church, encouraged by the progress of William's arms, the establishment of his authority throughout the kingdom, his gracious assurance of protection and toleration, and the pecuniary endowment he had willingly granted to her clergy, gave herself to the work of reconstruction with accustomed energy. Several of her ministers who had fled to Scotland gradually returned, and, together with those who had contrived to remain in the country, gave themselves zealously to their appropriate duties. Pastoral work was resumed ; meetings of Presbyteries were held, and order taken for re-occupying the waste places of the field. In a few years, she had become stronger and more vigorous than at any former period in her history. Her adherents constituted the largest portion by far of the Protestant population of the province. The sixty congregations that existed at the Restoration had increased to one hundred, of which about eighty were provided with pastors when the war of the revolution broke out. These congregations were associated in five Presbyteries, under one General Synod which, instead of meeting annually as originally intended, from the hostility of the government and the opposition of the prelates of the Establishment, had not met for the last thirty years.

Under the friendly government of William, meetings of the General Synod were now resumed. The first was held at Belfast, on the 8th of September, 1690. The minutes of this meeting have been lost, but from other sources we are able to state that its proceedings related chiefly to competing calls from vacant congregations to the same minister, the appointment of charitable collections for the relief of those whom the war had impoverished, and the return to their respective charges of those brethren who had fled to Scotland. No less than fifty had sought refuge in that land, and of these at least one-half had settled in parishes connected with the Established Church and refused to return.

The next meeting of the General Synod was held in Belfast, on the 8th of April, 1691; but the record of its proceedings has also been lost. It was followed in the autumn of the same year by another meeting held at Antrim, and attended by thirty-two ministers and twenty-one elders. The principal business that engaged the attention of this meeting was the erection of new congregations and the settlement of ministers. This is the first Synod whose minutes are extant, but it is only from the year 1697 that the minutes exist in unbroken succession till the present time. From 1693, the meetings were held annually in the month of June.

The relation of the law to Irish Presbyterians, at this time, was extremely unsatisfactory. Their worship and discipline and meetings of their church courts were under a ban, and the laws prohibiting them might at any time be enforced. Their chief protection lay in the favour of William, their warm and constant friend. As long as he was on the throne no serious interference with their religious freedom was to be apprehended. The principle of toleration may be said to have been hereditary in his family.

His great-grandfather, William the Silent, the founder of the Batavian Republic, was "the first prince in Europe who avowed and practised the principles of toleration which lie at the foundation of all religious freedom." His wife, Mary, though a Stuart, and a daughter of James II., was of a character as high and exalted as his own. He was by birth and early religious training, as already recorded, a Presbyterian, and so strongly attached to the Calvinism which has always formed a distinguishing element in the creed of the Presbyterian Church that he was wont to declare that if he were to abandon its tenets, he must abandon with them all belief in a superintending Providence. His accession to the throne was the means of conferring lasting benefits of incalculable value on each of the three kingdoms. Those that directly relate to religion alone claim our attention. In Scotland, it put an end to the terrible persecutions that during the previous twenty-eight years had crimsoned the heather of its hills with the blood of the noblest and best of its children, and placed the Presbyterianism that has always been strongly entrenched in the intelligence and affections of its people on a firm and enduring basis. In England and in Ireland, it was no less beneficial, and would have been much more beneficial than it really was had it not been that the desires of the sovereign were often and in several important matters thwarted by the bigotry and intolerance of the Episcopate. William was far in advance of his age, and entertained the broadest and most liberal views of toleration. He sought to imbue the clergy of the Established Church in both countries with his own generous spirit. He even endeavoured to procure such changes in the formularies and government of the Established Church as would enable non-conformists to enter its pale with a good conscience ; but the spirit of intolerant Episcopacy was too strong even for him. All that he could do was to hold its persecuting tendency in

check and, so far as Ireland was concerned, there arose frequent occasion for his restraining hand. For several years past, the Episcopalian and the Presbyterian had heartily united in the successful defence of their lives and their religion, but now that the danger was over, the Episcopal clergy began to manifest their ancient hostility against the Presbyterians. In 1692, a Presbyterian minister in County Down, at the instigation of an Episcopal clergyman, was cast into prison for no other offence than daring to hold a Presbyterian service in the parish of which he was the incumbent. On an appeal to the Lords-justices, at Dublin, the imprisoned clergyman was immediately released and his intolerant Episcopal brother instructed to forbear such prosecutions in future. From the commencement of the reign of Elizabeth the oath of supremacy was in force in Ireland. No Presbyterian could conscientiously take such an oath ; and had it been enforced, no Presbyterian could have held any office under the crown. By the connivance of the government it had been allowed for some time to remain a dead letter on the statute book. Now, to prevent the contingency of its being enforced under a less favourable administration, at William's suggestion, it was abolished, and the oath of fidelity and allegiance, which no loyal subject could justly refuse, was substituted in its stead.

The law in relation to non-conformity in Ireland presented at this time a curious contrast to a similar law in England. In England, the worship of the non-conformist was legalized, but he himself could hold no office under the crown unless he qualified for it by communicating in his parish church. In Ireland, the case was reversed. The non-conformist was eligible to all public offices, but his worship was prohibited under penalties the severity of which may be learned from the fact that every Presbyterian minister

who dared to dispense the Lord's Supper rendered himself liable to a fine of one hundred pounds. It was the desire of William that all such disabilities should be abolished, that the utmost freedom of worship should be allowed, and that all his Protestant subjects alike should be at full liberty to serve their king and country. But, being a constitutional monarch, and obliged to govern in accordance with law, his wishes were often disregarded. Unhappily the majority of those who had the making of the laws in their hands did not share with him in his liberal and tolerant views. In Ireland, this was, particularly, the case. The bishops of the Established Church were bent on extinguishing non-conformity, and as they were supreme in the House of Lords and could always command a majority in the House of Commons, they were able to make their baneful influence powerfully felt. At a time when the condition of their own church was such as to demand all their attention—when the state of things within their own communion was so scandalous that Queen Mary in writing to her husband a few days after the battle of the Boyne could say, "Take care of the Church of Ireland; every body agrees that it is the worst in Christendom"—at such a time, instead of giving attention to their proper work, and seeking to effect the much needed reformation within their several dioceses, they acted as if their chief business were to sweep every trace of Presbyterianism out of the country. They forgot that the Presbyterian had been but lately their most valued ally, and that had it not been for his seasonable and effective aid they might have been at that very time languishing in a prison, or in exile from their native shores. They obstinately opposed the passage of a bill for legalizing his worship. They endeavoured to procure the withdrawal of the Regium Donum from the ministers of his church, who, if loyalty to the sovereign, the promotion of the best interests of the country, and eminent services to the

cause of religion, were made the test of merit, could present claims to public recognition that far outstripped their own. They embraced every opportunity of harassing him that the law as it stood gave them. They branded him as a fornicator and his children as bastards, if he sought marriage within his own church. They dragged him and his minister too who dared to marry him into their courts, and under the sanction of a most obnoxious and oppressive law, mulcted both in a heavy fine.

A few instances of the active intolerance of the Episcopal clergy as it revealed itself at this period, and we close this long chapter.

In the year 1698, the Rev. John McBride, Presbyterian minister of Belfast, was summoned to Dublin, at the instigation of Walkington, bishop of Down and Connor, and arraigned before the Lords-justices, because he had the unpardonable presumption to assert in a sermon preached at the annual meeting of the Synod of Ulster, held at Antrim, that the right of self-government is inherent in the Christian Church, instancing the case of the Apostolic synod at Jerusalem, which assembled without any authority from the civil power. Towards the close of the same year, the Rev. William Biggar, of Limerick, was arrested and thrust into prison for no other offence than preaching, at their urgent request, to a few Presbyterian families in Galway. Three years afterwards, the Rev. J. Richardson, rector of the parish of Cookstown, Co. Tyrone, actually nailed up the doors of the Presbyterian church, to prevent the very people who had erected it from worshipping within its walls, on the alleged but groundless plea that it was built on his property. It is pleasant to relate that this violent proceeding of the intolerant rector proved but an impotent ebullition of petty malice. Mrs. Stewart, of Killymoon, a noble Presbyterian lady, resident in the neighbourhood, erected forthwith a church within her own demesne for the

use of the ousted congregation, and so speedily did the walls rise under her inspiring superintendence that within three weeks it was ready for occupation.

The object of all such tyrannical proceedings is easily discerned. It was hoped that, under such vexatious and harassing treatment, Presbyterianism would languish and eventually perish, leaving the Episcopal Church, as far as Protestantism was concerned, in undisputed possession of the field. But the hope was sorely disappointed. Presbyterianism possessed a vitality that the most malignant efforts of High Church intolerance were powerless to destroy. Like a well-known plant in our gardens, the more it was trampled on the more it grew. It flourished amid the storm. It stuck its roots more deeply into the soil. It shot forth its branches throughout Ulster. It made its influence felt in every corner of the Province. It enriched its hills and dales with a wealth of intelligence, and industry, and sobriety, which succeeding years as they rolled by only augmented. It poured its living streams into the other Provinces of the Kingdom, and thus proclaimed its solemn purpose to labour for Ireland's good till the whole island, redeemed, regenerated, disenthralled by the power of the gospel, shall be laid as a proud trophy at the feet of Immanuel.

CHAPTER X.

THE REIGN OF QUEEN ANNE

Death of William—Accession of Anne—King, bishop of Derry and the *Regium Donum*—Passing of the Test Act—Consequences—Unsatisfactory position of Presbyterians before the law—Presbyterian non-jurors—Work of intolerance and oppression goes on—Presbyterian seek the removal of the indignities heaped upon them—Their unswerving loyalty—Their ministers able and learned—Wanting in men of high social position—Growth of the Church—Laws to secure an efficient, learned, and sound ministry—Error shows itself—A time of declension sets in—Accession of George I.—*Regium Donum* restored and increased—Toleration Act passed—The Church in her home mission work—Gloomy forebodings of the High Church party—The Covenanters.

WILLIAM III. died, in consequence of a fall from his horse, on the 8th of March, 1702. His death was a serious blow to the cause of toleration, and to the interests of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. It deprived her of a warm, constant, and powerful friend, and opened the door to an outburst of Episcopal intolerance worthy of the days of Laud and Strafford.

According to the Revolution Settlement, William was succeeded by Anne, a sister of his wife Mary, and the last of the Stuarts. The new sovereign allowed herself to be controlled entirely by the High Church party, and, in consequence, the twelve years of her reign form a gloomy chapter in the history of the Irish Presbyterian Church. As soon as King, bishop of Derry, one of the most influential and malignant of the party in Ireland, heard of the king's death, he endeavored to move the Government either to withdraw the grant of Royal Bounty altogether, or, if continued, to distribute it in the way best fitted to promote the political subserviency of the recipients,

and to create divisions among them. “If it be thought fit,” said he, “to continue the fund to them, the government ought to keep the disposal of it in their own hands, and *encourage those only by it that comply as they would have them.* By which means, every particular minister *would be at their mercy;* and it might be so managed *as to be an instrument of division and jealousy amongst them.*” Though the bishop failed at the time to induce the Government to accept his base and unchristian suggestion, he did not abandon the effort. In the following year, the House of Commons, in which his partisans constituted the overwhelming majority, passed a resolution declaring that the pension of twelve hundred pounds per annum, granted to Presbyterian ministers in Ulster, is an unnecessary branch of the establishment. In the year 1711, the House of Lords passed a similar resolution, and in the same year the Convocation of the Clergy—the last meeting of the kind that has been permitted to be held in Ireland—was prompt to follow the example. There can be little doubt that had the Queen lived only a little longer, the obnoxious grant would have been abolished; but the accession of the House of Hanover that followed her sudden demise in 1714 restored, in a large measure, the tolerant and liberal spirit of William’s reign, and put an end to the baneful ascendancy of the High Church party.

Not content with endeavouring to secure the withdrawal of the Royal bounty from the Presbyterian ministers, which gave to each of them the paltry pittance of £12 a year; not content with questioning the validity of their marriages, and with subjecting those of their people whom they dared to marry to insulting, protracted and expensive lawsuits in the Bishops’ Courts, the High Church party secured the passage through parliament of a Bill providing that every person holding any office, civil or military, under the crown, must qualify for the position by partaking of the sacrament of

the Lord's Supper according to the usage of the Established Church. The intention obviously was to make the profession of Presbyterianism a degrading humiliation to its adherents, and especially to induce the more opulent and influential of its members to seek refuge from the disabilities it involved in the bosom of the Establishment. But their malevolent artifice bore little of the desired fruit. The dignities and emoluments of office are no light thing, to be easily and readily abandoned. It is not surprising, therefore, that "some of the baser sort" yielded to the temptation, and for the sake of office conformed to the Established worship. The overwhelming majority, however, were men of a nobler mould, and refused to sacrifice their religious convictions for wordly gain. Officers in the army and navy, justices of the peace, mayors of corporate towns, and all else holding public positions, with few exceptions, chose rather to relinquish the offices they held than make a sacrifice of their religious principles. In Belfast, the majority of the members of the corporation were Presbyterians, and were consequently superseded by Episcopilians. In Derry, ten out of twelve aldermen, and fourteen out of twenty-four burgesses, were turned out of their offices. Many of these very individuals had taken an active part in the memorable siege, and now the Government, whose very existence was largely due to their self-sacrificing valour and heroic endurance, thrust them out from the service of a city they had defended with their blood and treasure, for no other offence than refusing to abandon their church for rewards of a purely secular character.

The position of Presbyterians before the law was now as degrading as High Church bigotry and malevolence could well make it. Their worship and discipline were under the ban of the law; no legal toleration for either existed; they themselves were declared incapable of serving the crown and the country in the humblest capacity, unless they were

ready to make shipwreck of a good conscience. Though they formed at least the one half of the Protestant population of the country, and throughout all their history had evinced their unshaken loyalty by eminent services, it was not till the year 1719, and in the face of the most strenuous opposition from the High Church oligarchy, that a Toleration Act was passed, and a bare permission granted them by law to celebrate their worship. The disabilities the Test Act imposed were still perpetuated, and it was not till the year 1782 that this infamous Act was abolished, which placed—to quote their own just description of it in an address to Queen Anne—"An odious mark of infamy on, at least, the one half of the Protestants of this kingdom, whose, early, active and successful zeal for the late happy revolution gave the hope that they would not have been rendered incapable of serving your Majesty and the country."

An Act of parliament was passed in 1702 which required all persons in ecclesiastical or civil offices, and all preachers and teachers of separate congregations, to take the Abjuration oath, by which it was declared that the Pretender, that is, the son of the late James II., had no right or title to the crown. Of the one hundred and twenty or one hundred and thirty Presbyterian ministers now in Ireland, all with the exception of six readily took the oath. Those who refused, subsequently known as the Presbyterian non-jurors, were as strongly attached to the principles of the late Revolution as the rest of their brethren, but they refused to take the oath because it bound them, as they conceived, to swear that the Pretender was not the son of his reputed father, an alleged fact of which they did not profess to be assured. Their refusal was an unfortunate occurrence. It was doubtless the act of honest conscientious, men, but it gave their enemies of the High Church party a pretext for charging the whole Presbyterian body with disloyalty, and for continuing to in-

sult and oppress them. It, moreover, introduced an element of discord into the church, and exposed themselves to serious trouble. Three of them were compelled to seek safety in flight from the country, and one of them was thrown into prison, fined at the next assizes in £500, ordered to be imprisoned for six months, and then to take the oath. It was two years and a half before he was released from confinement.

During the whole of this Queen's reign, the work of intolerance and repression went on apace. It was not enough that the Presbyterians were refused a legal toleration for their worship ; it was not enough that they were declared ineligible to serve their sovereign and country, unless they were ready to surrender their religious convictions for the spoils of office ; it was not enough that they were subjected to insulting and offensive litigation in the Bishops' Courts for the unpardonable crime of being married by their own ministers ; something more must be done to brand their name and creed with reproach. According to the Irish Act of uniformity, "every schoolmaster keeping any public or private school" was required to promise conformity to the Established Church, but as no provision had been made for enforcing this part of the Act, a clause was introduced into the Schism bill for England, extending its operation to Ireland, by which the defect was supplied. According to the provisions of this iniquitous bill, every Presbyterian who ventured to teach a school, except of the very humblest description, rendered himself liable to imprisonment for three months. Nor was this all ; every Presbyterian house of worship might be at any moment forcibly closed. Encouraged by such decided acts of hostility on the part of the Government, the ruling classes exercised the power their positions gave them to harass Presbyterians. Bishops, in letting the ecclesiastical property they controlled, inserted clauses in their leases prohibiting under

severe penalties the granting of a site for a Presbyterian church, or the letting of a farm to a Presbyterian tenant. They also induced many great landowners to follow the example. The power of the press was employed to hold them up to public contempt and scorn. The celebrated Jonathan Swift did not scruple to prostitute his great talents to the undignified task. Dormant statutes were put into force to oppress them. Proceedings at law were taken against one of their ministers who had been sent by the Synod to give temporary supply of preaching to the Presbyterians at Drogheda, and another who followed him was arrested and committed to gaol for three months. At the instigation of the Episcopal clergy of the locality, the Presbytery of Monaghan were arrested and indicted for holding an unlawful and riotous assembly, because they had the audacity to meet in the little town of Belturbet, County Cavan, at the request of the Presbyterian inhabitants of the place, to deliberate respecting the formation of a new congregation and the erection of a church for its use. Their catechisms and other religious books were seized when exposed for sale, and in several instances their churches were actually nailed up to prevent service being held in them. How far further the intolerant spirit of the dominant party would have carried them, or how much longer the Presbyterian people would have borne with their injustice and tyranny, it is idle to enquire. It is enough to say that the violent and intolerable proceedings of the prelatic faction were suddenly checked by the unexpected death of the Queen, who breathed her last on the first of August, the very day on which the infamous Schism Act was to have come into operation. A new dynasty succeeded to the throne, prepared to concede to the Presbyterians of Ireland their just rights and privileges.

It is not to be imagined that the Presbyterians submitted to all these insulting indignities in cowardly silence. In

every legitimate and constitutional way they sought their removal. They justly regarded them as an intolerable grievance, and the feeling derived intensity from the consciousness that there was no party in the commonwealth, no portion of the great body of the people, who deserved better treatment at the hands of the State than themselves. By their active zeal and heroic struggles they had contributed largely to the successful accomplishment of the Revolution Settlement, by which the Protestant institutions of the country had been placed on a firm and enduring basis. There was not a disloyal man in their ranks. Whilst many of the faction, who were indefatigable in their efforts to crush them out of existence, gave countenance and encouragement to the movement that was on foot among the Tory party in England to secure the return of the expelled dynasty to the throne, they stood to a man with unflinching allegiance by the happy Revolution Settlement, prepared to defend and preserve it with the same zeal and fortitude they had brought to the task of its accomplishment. Nor had their services to the cause of true religion been less real and less distinguished. In the warfare with Romish error and superstition, and in the maintenance and diffusion of Scriptural truth, as well as in the promotion of the *best* moral interests of the country, they had always borne a leading part. It is only a just tribute to their worth to say that most of the genuine living protestantism that existed in the land was to be found within their communion. In the ranks of their clergy they could count not a few men, who, in the field of keen debate and learned discussion, were more than a match for the most noted of their assailants. The works of McBride, of Belfast, Kirkpatrick, of Templepatrick, Craghead of Derry, Boyse, of Dublin, and others, still exist to attest to the energy and success with which the bitterest attacks of the most powerful of their antagonists

were met and repelled. But with all the wealth of talent and scholarship that enriched and adorned their ranks, they were sadly wanting in men of high social standing, whose commanding influence would have made itself felt in the counsels of the realm. The great majority of the Protestant peasantry of Ulster, a large proportion of the mercantile community, and a few landed proprietors, were Presbyterians, but almost the whole of those who held high social and official positions were connected with the Established church. To estimate aright the relative influence of the different classes of society at the time, it must be remembered that politically the power of the people as yet amounted to very little. Feudalism in its outward form had ceased to exist, but its spirit was still rampant. The great landed proprietors controlled the entire legislation of the country, and, as these, in their turn, were controlled by the bishops of the Establishment, who always formed the working majority in the House of Lords, it is easy to see that the Presbyterians were certain to receive but scant consideration in the halls of legislation, especially when it is also remembered that they could seldom count more than half a dozen members in a House of Commons including between two and three hundred. Times are changed. Liberty is in the ascendant. Neither bishops nor landowners now wield the power they then exercised ; but the spirit of intolerance never dies, and, like the smouldering fire or the sleeping volcano, is sure to make its presence known at times. Hardly less than thirty years ago, a Presbyterian minister was dragged into the ecclesiastical courts, and fined in seven hundred pounds for unwittingly violating the law, by a slight act of indiscretion at a vestry meeting in a parish in County Down.

Notwithstanding the attempts that were made to sweep the Presbyterian Church out of existence, she continued to

grow in numbers and influence. In 1661, her congregations numbered sixty-one, and when William came to the throne, they had grown into one hundred, comprehended in five Presbyteries, and one general Synod. At the death of Queen Anne they had still further increased, and grown into one hundred and forty, embraced in eleven Presbyteries. This marked increase bears witness to the futility of the efforts of the High Church party to effect her extermination, and the unyielding firmness with which the thousands and tens of thousands of her loyal and loving children clung to her creed and polity. Though she experienced a difficulty in providing the constantly growing number of her congregations with adequate spiritual oversight, she continued carefully to guard the door of entrance to her ministry against the admission of men either insufficiently educated or unsound in the faith. The Synod of 1698 passed two important enactments, which were only a more specific declaration of existing regulations. The first ordered that none should be taken on trial for license who had not spent four years in the study of divinity, after having completed the required course in philosophy. The second decreed that no young man should be licensed to preach the gospel unless "he subscribe the Confession of faith in all the articles thereof, as the confession of his faith." By such means the church sought to guard her pulpits against the taint of heresy, and to supply her congregations with an able and efficient ministry. As yet no departure from her creed had made itself manifest among her clergy, and when one of them the Rev. Thomas Emlyn, pastor of the Wood Street congregation, Dublin, avowed himself an Arian, he was immediately deposed from the ministry as "holding a doctrine which struck at the foundation of christianity, and was of too dangerous a consequence to be tolerated among them." Unhappily, the church did not continue to be sufficiently careful to enforce

her own laws; the consequence was, as we shall see further on, that the error for which Emlyn was deposed continued to spread till her very existence was seriously imperiled. A long period of declension and deadness supervened; and it was not till fully a fourth part of the present century had passed away, that, by a return to the practice of her earlier and purer days, she retrieved her lost position, rallied around her in increasing ardour the loyal allegiance of her still faithful children, and took the place she continues to occupy as one of the purest and most vigorous of the churches of evangelical christendom.

During Bolingbroke's administration, which covered a large part of Anne's reign, measures were secretly taken, probably with the knowledge and concurrence of the Queen, to secure the succession to her brother, the Pretender, the son of James II. The Presbyterians were the only body in Ireland that were united in supporting the Revolution Settlement. The Synod, at its annual meeting in June, 1714, having learned that treasonable designs were on foot, secretly arranged to ascertain how many of its people were ready to take up arms to support the existing dynasty, and the result showed that no less than fifty thousand staunch Irish Presbyterians were prepared, at any moment, to venture their all in such a noble enterprise. To avoid suspicion, the Synod employed one of the French Protestant ministers, of whom there was a considerable number in Ireland at the time, to carry the gratifying information to his Highness, who received the intelligence "with many thanks, and was very fond to hear there were so many staunch friends to him in Ireland." The Romanists, to a man, were in favour of the Pretender. A large section of the Episcopal clergy, and many of the laity, were also ardent Jacobites. But before the scheme was ripe for execution, the

Queen suddenly and unexpectedly died, and George Louis, Elector of Hanover, ascended the throne, unopposed, under the title of George I.

The Presbyterians hailed the accession of the new dynasty with the liveliest satisfaction, and lost no time in bringing their claims before the King and his ministry, asking for the repeal of the Test Act, full legal protection for their worship and polity, and the restoration and increase of the Royal bounty. The prompt attention given to their petition evinced the friendly disposition of the new government. The Regium Donum was at once restored, with an addition shortly after of £800, making the total grant £2,000 a year. Toleration was slower in coming, for though the supremacy of the prelatic oligarchy was at an end for ever, its power was still strong enough to thwart the liberal intentions of the King and his ministers. But it came at last. In 1719, an Act securing it was successfully carried through Parliament, not, however, without the most strenuous opposition from a majority of the bishops. The Test Act still remained in force, and all efforts to secure its repeal proved unavailing. The impolicy of such a law by which a most important and loyal portion of the community was excluded from the service of their sovereign and country was soon made manifest. Though the sudden death of Queen Anne had spoiled the plans of the Jacobite faction for the restoration of the Pretender, they had not abandoned the hope of ultimately effecting their design. In the year immediately following the King's accession, they began to bestir themselves in England, and confidential agents from France were employed in providing for a rising both in Scotland and Ireland. The Government, apprised of the movement, took prompt measures for the security of the Kingdom. One of the steps taken was to enrol every able-bodied Protestant in Ulster. The Presbyterians constituted

by far the largest and most loyal portion of the Protestant population of the province, and yet not one of them, in consequence of the provisions of the Test Act, could engage in the services of his country, in this time of danger, without exposing himself to serious penalties. In the emergency, their loyalty overrode every other consideration. A meeting of the most influential laymen, and of the leading ministers of the Presbyterian Church, was held at Belfast, at which it was agreed to offer to the government the services of the whole Presbyterian body for the defence of the country. The offer was gladly accepted, and assurance given that as soon as Parliament assembled steps should be taken to protect the Presbyterian officers and soldiers from the penalties to which their loyalty and patriotism should expose them. The engagement of the Government was promptly fulfilled. As soon as parliament met, a bill was introduced to give it all the force of law, but so strenuous was the opposition the Bill encountered in the House of Lords from the bishops, headed by Archbishop King, whose hostility to the Presbyterians seemed to grow with his years, that the Government were reluctantly compelled to abandon it. The House of Commons, who were almost unanimous in its support, at once took steps to deprive its rejection of all ill consequences, by passing two resolutions, one declaring that the Dissenters who had been enrolled for the defence of the country "had thereby rendered a seasonable service to His Majesty's royal person and government, and the protestant interest of the Kingdom," and the other that "any who shall commence a prosecution against any Dissenter who has accepted or shall accept of a commission in the army or militia is an enemy to King George and the Protestant interest, and a friend of the Pretender."

During these exciting times, when the Presbyterians were displaying the loftiest patriotism, in the face of insulting

and humiliating disabilities, the church was not unmindful of her more appropriate work. Whilst engaged in a laudable attempt, as we shall afterwards see, when we come to speak more particularly of her missionary operations, to give the gospel in their own tongue to the Roman Catholic population of the island, she zealously endeavored to relieve the spiritual destitution of her own scattered children. In 1714 she had no less than twenty newly erected congregations on her home mission list, towards the support of which she contributed liberally in sums of varying magnitude. Her activity and growing strength account to some extent for the violent opposition she encountered from the prelatic faction. When they contrasted the few that attended the parish churches in Ulster with the multitudes that crowded the Presbyterian meeting houses, jealousy got the better of whatever sense and piety they possessed, and led them to cry out that the church was in danger. With their wailing foreboding there commingled a tone of bitter disappointment when they saw on the throne one who, as a Lutheran, was not even a prelatist, who had received only spurious sacraments from an unauthorized ministry, and who, worst of all, had embraced the doctrine that Presbyterians were true Protestants and entitled to public protection. One of the party, in a half despairing mood, declared that they were preparing "the people to expect nothing less than the total subversion of the constitution, the destruction of the hierarchy, the abolition of the liturgy, and the setting up of Presbytery." Archbishop King, in a letter to Archbishop Wake in 1719, immediately after the passing of the Toleration Bill, made use of language in which echoes of the same ludicrously alarming apprehension may be easily discerned. "We shall all feel the effect of it, and in truth, I cannot see how our church can stand here, if God does not, by a peculiar and unforeseen providence support it." Poor man ! His church

must have been weak indeed, if toleration of the Presbyterians threatened its downfall.

The intolerance of the prelatic faction was in one way successful. It drove many of the boldest and most resolute of the Presbyterian population of Ulster out of the province. When they saw that the most obnoxious of the grievances of which they complained were still perpetuated, and that the prospect of redress was daily becoming dimmer, they resolved to seek refuge from insulting and intolerable tyranny on the shores of the New World. "Now, recommenced," says Froude, a distinguished living historian, "the Protestant emigration which robbed Ireland of the bravest defenders of English interests, and peopled the American seaboard with fresh flights of puritans. Twenty thousand left Ulster on the destruction of the woollen trade. Many more were driven away by the first passing of the Test Act. The stream had slackened in the hope that the law would be altered. When the prospect was finally closed, men of spirit and energy refused to remain in a country where they were held unfit to receive the rights of citizens; and thence forward, until the spell of tyranny was broken in 1782, annual ship-loads of families poured themselves out from Belfast and Londonderry. The resentment they carried with them continued to burn in their new homes; and in the War of Independence, England had no fiercer enemies than the grandsons and the great grandsons of the Presbyterians who had held Ulster against Tyrconnell." "The first public voice in America for dissolving all connection with Great Britain," says Bancroft, "came, not from the Puritans of New England, the Dutch of New York, nor the Planters of Virginia, but from the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians. They carried with them to the new world the creed, the spirit of resistance, and the courage of Covenanters." Well might Lord Mountjoy say, in 1784, that "America was lost by Irish emigrants."

Hitherto the church had been remarkably free from internal trouble. Ministers and people had walked together in unbroken harmony, one in doctrine, worship and discipline. The deposition of Emlyn, in 1703, proved unhappily the precursor of a breach in the peaceable fellowship that had now existed for fully a century, which was not to be healed till another century had run its ample round of years.

In the early part of the eighteenth century, a latitudinarian spirit, promoted by the writings of such men as Dr. Samuel Clarke, Hoadly and others, began to spread in England and elsewhere. Error marches with a swift foot. It was not long till the same dangerous spirit made itself manifest in Ireland, and found ready acceptance among several of the younger ministers of the Presbyterian church, who had formed themselves into a clerical club, called the Belfast society, for the discussion of theological and other topics. Some of these young clergymen were men of marked ability. The Rev. John Abernethy, then of Antrim, afterwards of Dublin, the leading member of the Society, was one of the most distinguished controversialists of his day. His work on "The Being and Attributes of God" shows that to the possession of a powerful intellect he added the resources of extensive reading and close study. There is no clear evidence that they rejected any of the doctrines of the church, but the peculiar views and sentiments they propounded gave rise to the suspicion that at least some among them sat loose to her Calvinistic creed. They made light of mere doctrinal preaching; they insisted upon sincerity as the chief test of christian discipleship; they taught that erroneous opinions were only hurtful when wilful; and above all, they inveighed vehemently against the law which requires subscription to a creed or confession, as subversive of the right of private judgment and inconsistent with christian liberty and true Protestantism. They came to be known as

the “New Light” party, and though numerically they never acquired much strength, as they embraced in their ranks several of the ablest men in the synod, their influence was out of all proportion to their number. The controversy they provoked was long and bitter. No fewer than fifty publications of various sizes were issued in connection with it. In the end, in 1726, twelve ministers with their flocks, constituting what was called the Presbytery of Antrim, were excluded from the general body. The distinctive principle of these separatists was non-subscription to all creeds and confessions.

This unhappy controversy was the cause of serious injury to the Irish Presbyterian Church. It introduced an element of discord into all her congregations ; it arrayed her clergy into two hostile camps ; it converted her church courts into *arenas* of unseemly contention and strife ; it laid an arrest upon her missionary movements ; and, in the end, led to the *exclusion* from her communion of several of the ablest of her ministers, and not a few of the most influential of her laity. It was the commencement of a long and gloomy period of declension and decay, which became more marked and decided as the century advanced in its course. Error in doctrine crept in, and indifference to all the true interests of vital goodness grew apace. The great body of the people, it is true, remained faithful to their ancient faith. The Shorter catechism was still in wide circulation among them, and their children were diligently instructed in its principles ; but they did not escape the prevailing spirit of the times. The coldness, the indifference to the high claims of a living christianity, the deadness to divine things that was universal, especially in the last quarter of the century, surrounded them with an atmosphere impregnated with elements fatal to the growth of true piety and deep religious feeling. A decent regard continued to be paid to the outward

forms of religion, but the inward reality was sorely wanting. A secular spirit usurped the place of spiritual devotion. The sanctity of the Sabbath came to be openly disregarded in many quarters, and in the time of the volunteers, hereafter to be noticed, the different companies were wont to assemble for drill on the day of sacred rest. The churches ceased to be exclusively devoted to divine worship, and were thrown open, even on the Lord's day, to political gatherings, at which the burning questions of the day were freely discussed.

As the century rolled on towards its close, the church's declension from her former purity and zeal became wider and more pronounced. An increasing number of the clergy and of the wealthier and more influential of the laity were not ashamed to call in question the more precious doctrines of her creed. The supreme deity of the Son of God and the doctrine of the atonement were either quietly ignored or openly impugned in many of her pulpits. Dry homilies on the virtues of life took the place of evangelical preaching, and a lifeless morality was substituted for genuine piety.

Various causes contributed to produce this deplorable and wide-spread declension and decay. When the disturbing controversy regarding subscription to a particular creed as a test of ecclesiastical fellowship in which it originated was first started, the men who were ranged on the side of error were distinguished by eminent ability and high personal character. In the arena of debate they were more than a match for all their antagonists. There can be no doubt that the cause of orthodoxy suffered in consequence. The sophistry in which they freely indulged, recommended by the charm of a highly persuasive rhetoric, threw a bewildering glare over error, which the less captivating argumentation of their opponents proved insufficient to remove. It was far otherwise in the early part of the present century when the battle with Arianism was

successfully fought and won. Then, it is true, the New Light party embraced within their ranks several men of shining talents, of whom by far the most conspicuous was the late Dr. Henry Montgomery, of Dunmurry, near Belfast, but, at the same time, there were arrayed on the side of the orthodox cause a still larger number of men of still more splendid abilities, among whom the late Dr. Henry Cooke, of Belfast, to whom we shall have occasion to refer more fully hereafter, shone with preeminent lustre.

Another and more fertile source of the spread of New Light principles in the Irish Presbyterian Church in the last century was unfaithfulness in enforcing its own laws. When the "Subscription controversy" began, the General Synod was guilty of a weak connivance at breaches of its own enactments. Instead of adhering firmly to the law requiring subscription to the Westminster Standards, it passed, in 1720, what was known as the Pacific Act, giving to parties called on to subscribe the right to express in their own words any phrase or phrases in the Confession of faith to which they objected. This was done, doubtless, in the hope of reconciling the contending parties, but it betrayed a weak and vacillating spirit of which the New-Light party were not slow to take advantage. Scarcely had the ink been dry that recorded it when the Presbytery of Belfast proceeded to the induction of a clergyman into an important congregation in the town who declined to subscribe the Confession of faith in any form. This strange proceeding awoke a feeling of alarm throughout the whole church, and, at the following annual meeting of the Synod, the prevailing anxiety found expression in the unusually large attendance. One hundred and twenty of the one hundred and forty ministers on the Synod's roll, and one hundred elders were present; yet, unhappily, the same temporizing spirit that had already wrought much mischief was allowed to prevail. Nothing was done

to mark the Synod's disapprobation either of the proceeding of the Belfast Presbytery, or of the conduct of the clergyman whom they had inducted in open violation of law; and, though memorials from the sessions of seventeen congregations distributed over no fewer than seven counties of Ulster were laid before the court, urging the strict enforcement of the law of subscription, the Synod contented itself with affirming its belief in "the essential deity of the Son of God," and with resolving, still further, to *permit* all members of the court *who were willing*, to subscribe the Confession. In pursuance of this resolution, the great majority of the ministers in attendance signed the Confession; twelve of a minority, all members of the Belfast Society, refused. From this period the two parties were known respectively as Subscribers and Non-subscribers. The members of the Belfast society *also* declined to subscribe the declaration of belief in the essential deity of the Son of God, not because they disbelieved the doctrine, but because they were "against all authoritative human decisions as tests of orthodoxy." Such proceedings indicated that the stern unbending loyalty to divine truth that had hitherto marked the church's history had suffered serious diminution, and, to some extent at least prepared the way for the painful declension that after years were to witness. It is true the non-subscribing brethren, a few years afterwards were excluded from her ranks, mainly, to their honour be it recorded, by the votes of the eldership, but the separation, as it involved nothing more than exclusion "from ministerial communion in church judicatories," did little to arrest the downward tendency. The separated brethren still held ministerial fellowship with members of the Synod, some of whom were in full sympathy with their views, though they were not honest enough to avow it. By this means, the leaven of their principles was covertly diffused, seriously undermining the church's orthodoxy, sadly weakening all the

sinews of her strength, and in a marked degree hastening her progress towards the deadness that ultimately prevailed. In the last quarter of the century, the law requiring subscription to the Westminster standards was practically abandoned, and the prescribed course of training for the ministry became so limited that any candidate who had attended a divinity class only one session of five months might obtain license. A full Arts course was all that was held to be indispensable. Men so imperfectly trained on the most profound of the sciences were ill qualified to grapple with error, and just as little fitted to defend the truth against powerful assailants. A highly educated ministry may not be necessary for the effective preaching of the gospel, but when the defence of the truth is demanded, culture and scholarship become of prime importance. A bulrush is but a poor weapon with which to contend against a Damascus blade. The most learned and the most argumentative was the most successful of the apostles, and he who is set for the defence as well as for the preaching of the gospel, if he should prove himself to be a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, must be, not a novice, but a well equipped minister of the New Testament, "able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." It is true, he to whom all power on earth and in heaven is given will take care of his own gospel, and carry it forward to the consummation of which his own purpose and promise give assurance, but, in the accomplishment of his plans, he is pleased to employ human agency, and the whole history of the church is replete with evidence that he is wont to associate the greatest measure of success with the greatest measure of natural and acquired ability. A weakling never could have accomplished the work done by Luther. David refused to serve God with that which cost him nothing, and he who brings to the work of the ministry the fruits of a long and laborious preparation,

as well as the gift of a vigorous intellect, will certainly, if both be consecrated by a divine baptism, whether in the defence or the confirmation of the gospel, receive more abundant honour. Nor, is it out of place to mention here that at the time at which a downward tendency was spreading in the Irish Presbyterian Church, a similar process was going on in the Presbyterian Church in England. In this church, the evil also commenced in a demand for religious liberty, and in a refusal to be held in bondage by creeds and confessions. In the end, the usual consequence followed—the open rejection of all the vital principles of divine truth. Presbyterianism died out, and Arianism, which is little better than baptized infidelity, arose on its ruins. These events have a lesson for all the Presbyterian Churches of our times. In trumpet tones they proclaim the high importance of abiding with unswerving faithfulness by the scriptural standards to which they stand publicly pledged. Religious liberty is a high sounding but often misleading phrase. As used, it not unfrequently means liberty covertly to sow tares in the Lord's vineyard without let or hindrance. The history of the Presbyterian Church in England and in Ireland proves that their true safety lies in “disregarding the false cry for freedom, and in holding fast the faithful word as they have been taught,” in a definite and authorized confession, which all those who exercise the ministry within their communion must necessarily subscribe.

A yet more fertile source of the decay of religion in the Irish Presbyterian Church in the last century lay in the character of the theological training of the men who filled her pulpits. It is of prime importance that the education of candidates for the ministry should be in the hands of Professors preeminently sound in the faith. Even one Professor whose theological views are of a loose and uncertain character may do incalculable mischief. There is good reason to believe

that all the trouble that at this time disturbed the peace and paralyzed the energies of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland had its origin in the University of Glasgow. The majority of the men who filled her pulpits had studied at this venerable Institution, and from the prelections of Mr. Simson, the Professor of Divinity, had imbibed the latitudinarian sentiments that were now painfully prevalent among them. Though this Professor was set aside by the Church of Scotland in 1729, others holding sentiments scarcely less dangerous were allowed to hold chairs in the same University, of whom none exercised a more powerful influence than the celebrated Dr. Francis Hutcheson, Professor of Moral Philosophy. Dr. Hutcheson was a son of the minister of Armagh, and the first native of Ireland who was admitted to a Professor's chair in the University of Glasgow. He was a man of distinguished ability, and, as a Professor, speedily rose to such fame that students from England as well as from Ireland and all parts of Scotland flocked to his classroom. Unhappily his ethical system tended to the subversion of the great principles of evangelical truth, and, as it was urged with surpassing eloquence, it found ready acceptance among the young men who were brought under the spell of the brilliant rhetoric by which its principles were unfolded and enforced. Under such training "the young fry" of the pastors of the General Synod had learned to sit loose to evangelical truth, and in little more than a quarter of a century after the separation of the Presbytery of Antrim, New-Light principles had gained a fatal ascendancy.

In 1750, the Widows' Fund, designed to make some provision for the support of the widows of deceased clergymen who, on the demise of their husbands, had often been left in very destitute circumstances, was established in the Synod of Ulster. The scheme was just and proper. The design was laudable in the highest degree, but, strange to say,

one of the results of this eminently meritorious enterprise was to further the church's downward progress. The members of the Presbytery of Antrim were invited to join in the scheme, and readily accepted the invitation. The result of the closer and more frequent intercourse between the two bodies that necessarily arose out of this arrangement was to increase the growth of New-Light principles in the General Synod. Zeal for orthodoxy apparently had not as yet died out. The year previous, an Act was passed enjoining subscription to the Confession of Faith, but, for upward of thirty years afterwards, though the law was often evaded, no attempt was made to enforce it. From this time forward, the services of the pulpit assumed a more decidedly anti-evangelical tone. Doctrines which the people still held to be precious were not openly assailed, but they were not publicly taught. Human nature was credited with self-recuperative powers that it certainly does not possess, and the necessity for the work of the Redeemer was covertly called in question. A rigid adherence to divine truth was branded as sectarian bigotry, and a prevailing regard for a higher christian life was pronounced to be either a hollow pretence, or, if genuine, needless and unprofitable austerity. A spurious liberalism usurped the place of a scriptural faith, and all sorts of people were encouraged to look for a hopeful issue in the final awards of a merciful Father.

When the state of things of which we have now furnished but a faint outline began to make itself painfully manifest in the Irish Presbyterian Church, thousands within her communion, who still cherished an unwavering attachment to the faith of their fathers, happily found relief from the defections of the times in a movement that began in Scotland in 1732, a brief narrative of which we propose to give in the following chapter, as it was destined to exercise a most beneficial influence in coming years on the cause of evangelical truth in Ireland.

CHAPTER XI.

THE RISE OF THE SECESSION AND COVENANTING BODIES
IN IRELAND.

Patronage established in Scotland—History of—Leads to Secession—Ebenezer Erskine—The Secession extends to Ireland—Mr. Patton, the first Secession minister settled in Ireland, ordained at Lylehall—A Secession Presbytery formed—The Secession body in Scotland rent in twain—The division extends to Ireland—Burghers and Anti-burghers—The separation does not stop the progress of the Secession—Presbyteries and Synods formed in connection with both bodies—The division healed in 1818—The General Synod as it stood in 1751—Looking for an increase of the Regium-Donum—Disappointed—The Pretender—Loyalty of the Ulster Presbyterians—Strife betwen the Secession and the General Synod—Public discussion at Ballyrashane—First appearance and subsequent progress of the Reformed Presbyterians in Ireland.

PATRONAGE, a system by which lay patrons were empowered to appoint pastors to vacant congregations in the Church of Scotland, never found favour with the great body of the Scottish people. At the Revolution, when Presbyterianism resumed its rightful place as the national religion, it was entirely abolished, and the right of appointment virtually vested in the electoral choice of the members of each separate congregation. When the Union between Scotland and England was effected in 1707, stringent provision was made for securing and preserving all the rights and privileges of the National Church, as declared and secured at the Revolution. Among other things, it was enacted, that the Confession of faith and the Presbyterian form of church government were “to continue without any alteration to the people of this land in all succeeding generations.” But, five years only had elapsed, when, under the Bolingbroke administration, and chiefly by Jacobite influence, a bill was carried through parliament by large

majorities, in the face of the most strenuous opposition from the Church, by which patronage was restored and the people deprived of the right of election. So decided was the feeling against the change in the church and among the people generally, that patrons refrained from exercising the power the bill gave them, and for nearly twenty years after it was passed, settlements in congregations continued to be effected as formerly. But many of the patrons being Jacobites, anxious for the restoration of the Stuart dynasty, and bitter enemies of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, which was pre-eminently loyal to the Hanoverian succession, took advantage of a clause in the Act, and kept parishes vacant for years. In 1719, this defect in the Act was remedied, and it was declared that, unless a settlement was effected within six months from the occurrence of the vacancy, the power of appointment was to pass to the Presbytery. Yet, though shorn of its power for mischief in this particular, the Act was so thoroughly at variance with the sentiments and wishes of the Scottish people that it begat an endless amount of strife and division, until it was finally abolished about twenty years ago, and the right of election restored to the people.

Even when the church came to acquiesce in the law of patronage, there was always a party within her communion, including a goodly number of the ablest and most devoted of her clergy, as well as of the most intelligent and pious of her people, who were eagerly bent on the removal of the obnoxious measure. This feeling soon found public expression. In the Assembly of 1732 an Act was passed, declaring that in every case in which the right of appointment devolved upon Presbyteries by the declinature or delay of patrons to present, the heritors and elders in landward parishes, and the town council and elders in burghal parishes, should at a meeting of the Presbytery, and in the face of

the congregation, give a call to some one to be their minister ; that the person thus elected should then be proposed to the congregation, to be either approved or disapproved by them ; and that in case of disapproval, the Presbytery should give judgment upon their reasons, and determine the matter. This rule was to be observed till it should please God in his providence to relieve the church of the law of patronage. This enactment, which probably went as far as the church had power to go in guarding the rights of the people, failed to satisfy the more earnest portion of the Assembly, who held that congregations were endowed by Christ, the only King and Head of the church, with the right to choose their own ministers. Of this party, the celebrated Ebenezer Erskine, minister of Portmoak, Kinross-shire, was by far the most conspicuous member. Not content with denouncing the measure from his own pulpit, the zealous preacher took the opportunity of declaring his sentiments in the presence of a large number of his brethren, in a sermon that according to custom he preached as moderator, at the opening of the annual meeting of the Synod of Perth and Stirling. He chose for his text, "The stone which the builders refused is become the head-stone of the corner," and, in immediate relation to the subject that was uppermost in his mind, proceeded to say : "There is a two-fold call necessary for a man's meddling as a builder in the Church of God ; there is the call of God and of his church. God's call consists in qualifying a man for his work ; inspiring him with a holy zeal and desire to employ these qualifications for the glory of God and the good of his church. The call of the church lies in the free choice and election of the Christian people. The promise of conduct and counsel in the choice of men that are to build is not made to patrons, heritors or any other set of men, but to the church, the body of Christ, to whom apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers are

given. As it is the natural privilege of every house or society of men to have the choice of their own servants or officers, so it is the privilege of the House of God in a particular manner. What a miserable bondage it would be reckoned for any family to have stewards or servants imposed on them by strangers, who might give the children a stone for bread, or a scorpion instead of a fish, poison instead of medicine? And shall we suppose that ever God granted a power to any set of men, patrons, heritors or whatever they may be—a power to impose servants on His family without His consent, they being the freest society in the world?" Rising into a strain of lofty declamation as he drew near to the end of his sermon, he exclaimed, "A cry is gone up to heaven against the builders by the spouse of Christ, like that Cant., v, 7, 'The watchman that went about the city found me; they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me.' A cry and complaint came in before the bar of the last Assembly for relief and redress of these and many other grievances, both from ministers and people. But instead of a due regard had thereto, an Act is passed conferring the power of election unto heritors and elders, whereby a new wound is given to the prerogatives of Christ, and the privileges of his subjects. Allow me to say that whatever church authority may be in that Act, it wants the authority of the Son of God . . . by it the cornerstone is receded from ; He is rejected in his poor members, and the rich of the world put in their room."

Much of this language gave great offence to many who heard it. A motion for enquiring was immediately moved and carried, and after a warm debate which lasted for three days, the bold preacher was declared deserving of censure by a majority of six. Erskine appealed to the General Assembly. When the appeal came before the Assembly, after a long and heated discussion, they found that the lan-

guage he had used in his synodical sermon, "was offensive, and tended to disturb the peace and good order of the church," and appointed him to be rebuked at the bar, and rebuked he was. Against this decision Erskine protested, and in his protest was joined by William Wilson, the minister of Perth, Alexander Moncrieff, the minister of Abernethy, and James Fisher, the minister of Aberdalgie. Having laid their protest on the table of the Assembly, the four quietly took their departure, never, as the event proved, to return. The Assembly, regarding the protest as a defiance of its authority, summoned the protesters again into its presence, and, in the hope of reconciliation, appointed a committee to confer with them. As the conference proved fruitless, the Assembly, unwilling to proceed hastily to extremities, and desirous to give the protesters time for further and fuller consideration, remitted the case to the Commission at its meeting in August, empowering it to suspend them from the exercise of the ministry, if they did not then withdraw their protest, and express sorrow for their conduct, and to proceed to a higher censure at its meeting in November, if they should be found to have disobeyed the sentence of suspension.

When the Commission met in August, seven Presbyteries sent memorials favouring the protesters, but as they continued recalcitrant and declined to resile from the position they had taken, they were suspended from the office of the ministry. When November came round, and it was found that they were still in the same mind, and had added to their offence by disregarding the act of suspension passed in August, the Commission, after another fruitless attempt at reconciliation, proceeded, not to depose them from the office of the ministry, but to loose them from their respective charges, and to declare them no longer ministers of the Church. Against this sentence they entered a solemn protest, in which they declared that they would still continue to minister to their

several congregations, that they would not cease to hold ministerial communion with such of their brethren as had not given way to the defections of the times, that they were obliged to make secession from the prevailing party in the church for having declined from Covenanted principles, ending by declaring their right “to exercise the keys of doctrine, discipline and government according to the Word of God, the Confession of Faith, and the principles and constitutions of the Covenanted Church of Scotland,” and by appealing “to the first free, faithful and reforming General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.”

The four Seceders immediately constituted themselves into a Presbytery, and shortly afterwards published their “First Testimony to the government, worship and discipline of the church,” in which they tell the story of the steps which led to their expulsion, trace the history of the church in her reforming and declining periods, bewail the departure of Covenating times, and charge the church with having broken down her constitution, with harbouring heretics, forcing hirelings on the flock, and stopping the mouths of faithful men who felt constrained to testify against her.

It cannot be justly said that there was anything in Mr. Erskine’s synodical sermon that called for ecclesiastical censure, and it is certain that the Assembly dealt with him and with those who joined with him in his protest with undue severity. Of this, the Assembly itself became, ere long, fully convinced. At its meeting in May, 1734, it conceded to the protesters all that they had asked, and went so far as to repeal its own laws in the hope of winning them back. It even empowered the Synod of Perth and Stirling to rescind the Act of expulsion, and to restore them to their former status in the Church. It is certain that Wilson was willing to return, but Erskine was not to be moved. Undoubtedly, there was much to encourage them to maintain the position they had taken.

They commanded a large measure of public sympathy ; their names were every where pronounced with reverence as the champions of the rights of the people ; their congregations, regarding them as martyrs and confessors, refused to be separated from them, and forcibly withheld the ministers who were sent to make public intimation of the severance of the pastoral tie. The Church, notwithstanding, still continued to hope for their return, and proceeded to other measures of a reforming character, with a view to smooth the way, but all was in vain. As they had not been frightened by threats, they were not to be cajoled by kindness. Towards the end of 1736, they published their "Judicial Testimony," and thus widened the breach that had been already created. For eight years after their secession, they were allowed to retain their churches, and draw their stipends ; but, in 1740, the Assembly, when all efforts at reconciliation had proved unavailing, solemnly deposed them from the office of the ministry, on the ground that they had been guilty of contumacy, and had, in divers ways followed divisive courses from the church as established by law, and contrary to their ordination oaths. They were now deprived of all the advantages of connection with the Established Church, and left to depend for support on the voluntary contributions of their adherents. In a financial sense, they probably suffered little ; but in name and fame they were immeasurably gainers. As able evangelical ministers of the Church of Scotland they would have commanded a wide temporary reputation ; but as the Fathers and Founders of the Secession Church, their names will continue to be pronounced with reverence through coming generations, not alone in the land that was the scene of their zealous labours, but in all lands where the principles for which they contended have found wide-spread circulation.

The fame of the Secession movement in Scotland soon crossed the channel, and reached Ireland, where it became

the subject of the most earnest discussion in thousands of Presbyterian homes. Patronage was unknown in the Irish Presbyterian Church. Congregations enjoyed the fullest liberty in the choice of their pastors, and justly prized the privilege. It was natural, therefore, for Irish Presbyterians, whilst deplored the rent that had deprived the mother church in Scotland of several of the best of her ministers, to sympathize with the out-going party. Had the Synod of Ulster, at the time, been in the same healthy condition that marked the whole of its history during the previous century, the event would have received nothing more, at most, than such an expression of approval as was extended to the secession movement, on a very much larger scale, and on similar grounds, that, in 1843, issued in the formation of the Free Church. But this, unhappily, was far from being the case. Not a few of the ministers that filled its pulpits sat loose to the cardinal doctrines of the gospel, and, for the living bread of divine truth, substituted fanciful speculations that were incapable of making wise to life eternal. It is not surprising, therefore, that when the Scottish secession came to be discussed in the homes of Presbyterian Ulster, some of the more earnest and devoted of the people began to look to the movement, as opening up a prospect of release from the corruption that had stealthily crept into their own beloved Zion, and that, unhappily, instead of diminishing, seemed to be constantly on the increase. Still, no active steps were taken to engage the attention or to obtain the aid of the Seceders across the channel, until circumstances arose that seemed to call loudly for an appeal to their generous assistance. In 1736, a disputed settlement took place at Lisburn, near Belfast. The dissentients, baffled in their efforts to prevent the induction of an unacceptable pastor, transmitted a memorial to the Secession Presbytery in Scotland, signed by one hundred and eighty heads of families, stat-

ing that a minister had been imposed upon them by the Presbytery of the bounds, and praying "that one might be sent to them who would preach the gospel, not in wisdom of men's words, but in the purity and simplicity thereof." In 1741, a similar application was made by the people of Lylehill, a place but a short distance from Lisburn, and in the following year, two Commissioners were sent over to support the application. The Secession body was yet in its infancy, and moreover, was meeting with such success in Scotland, that it was impossible for it, however willing, to comply immediately with such applications. In the summer of 1742, they sent over Mr. Thos. Ballantyne, the first Secession minister who visited Ireland. Mr. Ballantyne remained little more than a fortnight, and was succeeded by Messrs. Gavin Beugo and John Erskine, who, though they remained longer than Mr. Ballantyne, soon returned to Scotland. No further appointments were made till 1745, during which several Secession preachers visited Ulster, attracting, wherever they appeared, crowded audiences. Meanwhile, the Secession body had grown so rapidly in Scotland that the original "Associate Presbytery" had expanded into the three Presbyteries of Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Dunfermline, which, on the 11th of October, 1744, were organized into "The Associate Synod." The newly organized synod held its first meeting at Stirling, on the first Tuesday in March, 1745, and on that occasion, Mr. Isaac Paton, a licentiate under the care of the Presbytery of Dunfermline, was commissioned to preach nine sabbaths in Ulster. Mr. Paton was a highly acceptable preacher, and on the 6th of the following July, the adherents of the Associate Synod in Templepatrick, Belfast and Lisburn, unanimously agreed to invite him to be their pastor, Mr. John McAra, a member of the Presbytery of Glasgow moderating in the call. Shortly afterwards, the Pretender made his appearance in Scotland, and in consequence of the disturbed state of the

country it was not till the 9th of July in the following year that Mr. Paton was solemnly invested with the pastoral office at Lylehill, by a Commission appointed by the Presbytery of Glasgow, in accordance with instructions issued by the Synod that met at Edinburgh, in the previous April. Other ordinations followed soon afterwards, and in 1750, the first Secession Presbytery in Ireland, consisting of three members, was organized at Arkilly, near Newton-limavady, County Derry.

The Secession body in Scotland had not been long in existence till it was rent in twain by a division of sentiment among its members relative to the propriety of taking the oath administered to burgesses in several of the borough towns, which pledged all who took it to abide by and defend all their lives "the true religion presently professed within the realm, and authorized by the laws thereof." Some, contending that the phrase "the true religion," meant simply Protestantism as distinguished from Romanism, saw nothing objectionable in the oath; others held that it involved a recognition of patronage and all the other abuses of the Established Church, and that, therefore, no true Seceder could honestly and conscientiously enter into such an engagement. When the separation took place, each party retained the name of "The Associate Synod," but, in popular language, the one was known as Burghers, and the other as Anti-burghers. The question at issue had no practical application in Ireland, yet, the Seceders there took up the quarrel with all the earnestness and acrimony that had entered into the discussions of the contending parties in Scotland, and, like their brethren across the channel, divided into two separate bodies, known popularly by the same distinctive names. The disruption, however, did not seriously interfere with the progress of the Secession cause in Ireland. Both bodies grew and multiplied apace. As

early as 1757, the ministers of the Burgher party were sufficiently numerous to be constituted into a Presbytery, which was organized on the 24th of July in this year, in William McKinlay's field, at Ballybay, Co. Monaghan, and consisted of three ministers. This, which was called the Presbytery of Monaghan, did not long stand alone. In a few years, two others, those of Down and Derry, were added to it; the three, embracing altogether twenty ministers, were united in one Synod, which met for the first time at Monaghan, on the 20th October, 1779. The progress of the Anti-burgher party was hardly less rapid. In 1788, they could count no less than four Presbyteries, Belfast, Derry, Markethill, Templepatrick and Ahoghill, including seventeen congregations, which were formed into a Synod, that held its first meeting in Belfast, in 1788.

Various efforts were made, at different times, to reunite the two separate bodies; but it was not till the year 1818, that these efforts were crowned with success. On the 9th of July in that year, they both met at Cookstown, and according to terms of union previously agreed upon, formed themselves into one body, under the designation of "The Presbyterian Synod of Ireland, distinguished by the name Seceders." The Rev. James Rentoul of Ray was chosen the first moderator of the united Church, which embraced at this period ninety-seven ministers.

In 1751, the congregations of the General Synod of Ulster amounted to one hundred and fifty-seven, and those of the non-subscribing Presbytery of Antrim that had been formed in 1726 to thirteen. It is a significant evidence of the dislike with which the Presbyterian people of Ulster generally regarded New Light principles, that in a quarter of a century this body was able to add but one to the number of its ministerial charges. About this time the propriety of an endeavour to procure an augmentation of the Royal

bounty engaged the serious attention of the Synod. Few of the ministers were in comfortable circumstances. A series of bad harvests had greatly impaired the ability of their congregations to contribute towards their support, and the increase in their number had seriously reduced the amount of the equal dividend from the Regium-Donum grant. Whilst the subject was under consideration, circumstances arose which led them to hope that an effort of the kind would likely succeed. When the standard of rebellion was raised in the Highlands of Scotland in 1745, and the Pretender himself appeared on the scene, determined to make a bold stand for regaining the throne of his ancestors, the Ulster Presbyterians were forward to evince their unshaken loyalty to the house of Hanover. As it was suspected that the Romanists of the country were ready to join in supporting the cause of the Pretender, the moment a favourable opportunity arose, the Protestants of Down and Antrim, promptly took steps to resist any movement of the kind, should it be made, and, at the same time, published a declaration in which they boldly announced their determination, "at the hazard of their lives and fortunes to oppose all attempts against his majesty's person and government." But though these prompt and seasonable demonstrations of loyalty did much to strengthen the hands of the government in the crisis that had risen, the Synod, which, in the meantime, had been led to expect a substantial expression of the Royal favour, was doomed to disappointment. Some in high places were disposed to regard its claim as entitled to the heartiest recognition, but opposing influences were at work that it was found at the time impossible to overcome.

It is not to be supposed that the Secession body in Ireland was allowed to prey upon the Presbyterian fold without let or hindrance. The ministers of the General Synod were but men, and it was only natural that they should look upon

the coming of the Secession preachers into their parishes as an unwarranted intrusion, and should brand them as disturbers of the peace, fomenters of dissension and strife, and abettors of dissatisfied and disaffected elements in their congregations. The feeling of resentment with which they regarded the unwelcome intruders was not likely to suffer any diminution in its intensity, when these zealous propagandists were found ready to hurl back their reproaches with interest, charging them with gross unfaithfulness in the discharge of their ministerial functions, and with "discoursing in their pulpits like heathen moralists," instead of proclaiming the glorious gospel. In the unseemly strife that now arose, the customary modes of warfare, in such circumstances, were eagerly resorted to. Sermons were preached, pamphlets were written, and public discussions were held. Of the publications on the side of the General Synod, none were more effective than the document entitled "A Serious Warning to the People of Our Communion," issued in the name of the General Synod. We subjoin a paragraph from this brief but vigorous paper, as it furnishes a vivid view of the battle as it was waged on both sides. "And whereas," it proceeds to say, "some teachers known by the name of Seceders, have in a most disorderly way, introduced themselves into our bounds, and in many ways have vehemently railed against this Synod, as if we kept in our communion such as are tainted with the most dangerous errors; we hereby declare that no such thing has ever yet appeared to us in a judicial way, and sure it would be most contrary to the rules of reason and Presbyterian government, to cast out of our communion any member or members without trial or evidence of any sort; and therefore we challenge and cordially invite all such as pretend to know any such person or persons, to appear and libel them according to the known rules of Presbyterian church discipline—and we faithfully promise if

any be convicted, that they shall be duly censured, according to the demerit of their crime. And further, we recommend to all the inferior judicatories of this church, to do their utmost, in a true Presbyterial way, to purge this church of all unsound members, if any such be among us; and to endeavour with all true zeal and diligence, to preserve, as much as lies in their power, the purity of doctrine, discipline and worship established in this church, within their respective bounds."

The battle waxed hot and fierce. Not content with fulminating against each other from their respective pulpits, or with issuing acrimonious pamphlets from the press, the more warlike of the belligerents longed for closer combat, and accordingly, public discussions were held in which chivalrous champions of the contending parties employed the full strength of their controversial powers, aided by the most fervid eloquence, to win, each for his own side, the verdict of popular approval. One of the most noted of these theological contests took place in the summer of 1747, at Ballyrashane, a rural district lying between Coleraine and the Giant's Causeway. The combatants were Mr. John Swanston, a Licentiate, on the side of the Secession, and the Rev. Robert Higinbotam, one of the ministers of Coleraine, on the side of the General Synod. On a platform, erected in the open air, the two warlike antagonists belaboured each other with the utmost vehemence for a live long day, in the presence of an immense congregation, with the usual result in such cases, that each party claimed the victory.

It would be idle to claim on behalf of the Secession body in Ireland that it was faultless. From the very outset it was tainted by a spirit of narrowness and bigotry, but ill accordant with the broad and comprehensive spirit of the gospel. There can be no doubt, however, that it conferred lasting benefits on the Presbyterianism of Ireland.

It gave to it not a few of the best men who have adorned its history, and it materially contributed to the preservation, in a period of declension and decay, of those vital principles of a pure gospel that have raised the Presbyterian Church in Ireland in our times to a foremost place among the living churches of Christendom.

The first appearance of the Scotch Seceders in Ireland was followed not long after by the appearance of another body of Scotch Presbyterians of a still more rigid type. About the middle of the last century, two missionaries of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, or, as they were commonly designated, two *mountain ministers*, the Rev. John Cameron, and the Rev. Thomas Cuthbertson, arrived in Ulster, and preached in several localities, attracting large audiences. The body that they represented had only come into existence a few years previous. The first Presbytery of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, as the new organization was technically designated, was constituted at Braehead, in the parish of Carnwath, Scotland, in August, 1743, and consisted originally of two ministers, the Rev. Messrs. McMillan and Nairne, and some ruling elders. One of the distinctive principles of this body was a refusal to acknowledge the authority of any but a Covenanting king, or to allow any of its members to hold any office, civil or military, under the Crown. In 1752, Mr. Cuthbertson emigrated to America, under the direction of the Reformed Presbytery in Scotland, and shortly after, Mr. Cameron became a minister of the Synod of Ulster. About the year 1761, the Rev. Matthew Lynd, the first Irish Covenanting minister, was settled at Vow, near Rasharkin, Co. Antrim. It was not till 1792 that the first Irish Covenanting Presbytery was constituted, and on the first of May, 1811, the first meeting of the "Reformed Presbyterian Synod," including four Presbyteries, the Eastern, the Western, the Northern and the Southern, was held at Cullybackey, near Ballymena, Co. Antrim.

The Covenanters have never met with much success either in Scotland or Ireland. Their peculiar views relative to the civil government of the kingdom have doubtless interfered with their progress. They have always been distinguished by a strict adherence to the great principles of divine truth, and, for intelligence and piety, they compare favourably, ministers and people alike, with any other branch of the great Presbyterian family. At present, they number about forty congregations in Ulster; it is difficult to discover any justification for their separate existence as a denomination ; the line that divides them from the great body of the Presbyterian people of Ireland is so small as to be almost invisible.

CHAPTER XII.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF GEORGE III. TILL THE CLOSE
OF THE CENTURY.

Rejoicing at the accession of the young king—Address from the Synod of Ulster and Presbytery of Antrim—Public discontent and disturbance—Rise of the volunteers—Political agitation—Secret societies—Objects at first legitimate, soon seditious and revolutionary—The rebellion of '98—Incidents of—in the North—in the South—Ballynahinch—Vinegar Hill—Wexford Bridge—Scullabogue Barn—The Presbyterians unjustly charged as the instigators of the rebellion—The rebellion happily unsuccessful—Progress of the Presbyterian Church—Dr. Campbell, of Armagh, defends the church from an attack by a bishop—Discussion between the Seceders and the Covenanters.

GEORGE III., grandson of the late king, George II., ascended the throne in the month of October, 1760, amidst the heartiest rejoicings of all classes of his subjects. He was young ; he was an Englishman by birth and education ; and, under the able administration of Mr. Pitt, the most illustrious statesman who as yet had guided the destinies of the nation, the country was growing rapidly in wealth and power. In the war with France, begun five years before, the British arms had of late been signally successful. Only a year previous, the gallant Wolfe had fought and won the battle of the Plains of Abraham, which resulted in the cession of the vast territory now known as the Dominion of Canada to the British Crown.

By no class of His subjects was the young king's accession more heartily welcomed than by the Irish people. The Presbyterians were not behind in tendering their congratulations. The Synod of Ulster and the Presbytery of Antrim united in an address to the new

monarch, brimful of the most ardent loyalty. But, under all the splendour of the outward rejoicings that greeted the accession of the young sovereign, there existed elements in the social condition of the people that boded danger to the public peace. Poverty was deep and wide-spread, and the habits of the people, in too many instances, only tended to aggravate the evil. Even energy and industry could hardly succeed in keeping the wolf from the door. As the great mass of the people were engaged in agriculture, the exactions of the landlords, many of whom resided abroad, and most of whom were cruelly regardless of the welfare of their tenantry, absorbed the greater portion of their earnings, and left in their hands but the merest pittance for the support of their families. Even in the north, where the condition of the Protestant population contrasted favourably with the condition of the people in the other provinces of the kingdom, there was much to breed discontent, and to provoke public disturbance. Secret societies under the names of "Oak Boys" and "Hearts of Steel" arose, and many outrages were committed. It is easy to condemn the lawless proceedings of these associations, but when it is remembered that they aimed, not to subvert the institutions of the country, but simply to secure relief from the unjust and intolerable exactions of a privileged class that habitually and remorselessly robbed them of the fruits of their toil, the sentence of condemnation will likely be pronounced in a milder tone. It is certain that if the poor down-trodden people had been treated with ordinary kindness, and the slightest disposition had been shown to redress the wrongs that were sorely embittering every hour of their lives, they would have caused no disturbance of the public peace. Presbyterians, always and everywhere, are friends of law and order; but oppression makes wise men mad; and if, in some instances they have surrendered themselves to the guidance of the madness that oppression

generates, if not an ample vindication, certainly a satisfactory apology for their conduct may be found in the circumstances in which it originated. The truth is that the people of Ulster began at the time to feel that they had submitted to unjust and unequal laws, and the tyranny of a proud and oppressive oligarchy, long enough, and that the time had come when they should resolutely assert their claim to a larger share of liberty, and, with the manly dignity worthy of free men, seek the removal of the insulting and vexatious grievances they had too long patiently endured. By and by circumstances arose that tended materially to develop and strengthen this feeling.

The war that Britain was unhappily led to wage with the revolted American Colonies, followed by a war with France, stripped Ireland of a large body of the troops usually kept in its garrisons for its defence. The country, in consequence, was peculiarly exposed to danger, for a French force might, at any time, land on its coasts, rousing the Romish population into open and active rebellion. As a measure of self protection, the people of Ulster, with the concurrence of the government, began to enrol themselves into volunteer companies, and so amazingly popular did the new movement become, that in a few years, 100,000 men had joined the association. The volunteers purchased their own arms and accoutrements, elected their own officers, and were regularly drilled and organized. The great majority were Presbyterians ; and, as the several companies assembled for drill, they were wont, ere they separated, to form themselves into political debating societies, at which existing grievances were freely discussed, and a claim to larger measures of freedom strongly urged. The government, fully aware that, at any moment, they might be compelled to depend upon this volunteer force for the defence of the country from foreign aggression or internal rebellion,

began to manifest an anxious desire to conciliate the Presbyterians. In 1780, they repealed the Test Act, which, for more than three-quarters of a century, had imposed "an odious mark of infamy" upon this important section of the community. Two years afterwards, they passed an Act, notwithstanding the strenuous opposition of the bishops, declaring valid all marriages celebrated by Presbyterian ministers, and two years still further on, they added £1,000 a year to the Regium Donum grant. In 1792, they augmented this grant by the still larger addition of £5,000. In 1784, the Seceders, who hitherto had not been favoured with a State allowance, were admitted to a share in the Royal bounty. Chiefly, through the influence of their great friend and patron, the Earl of Hillsborough, they were voted £500 a year, with a proportionate share in the £5,000 just mentioned.

Meanwhile, military ardour and political agitation proceeded with equal pace. New volunteer companies were continually springing into existence, and, as they were found in all parts of the province, and seldom separated without entering upon a free and often excited discussion of great public questions, a dangerous enthusiasm began to pervade the entire community. The story of American Independence and the French Revolution helped to fan the spreading flame. Intoxicated with the enthusiasm that sprang from the frequent and admiring discussion of these great movements on the side of liberty, the more ardent of the volunteers began to scorn the idea of further application to the power that had only shown a disposition to listen to their demands when they had been able to make them with arms in their hands, and to hint at entire separation as the only remedy for the grievances of which they had still just reason to complain. As the glowing vision of such an independence for their country as the American Colonies had won

for themselves rose higher in the sky of their contemplation, it assumed a more splendid and dazzling aspect. No sacrifice was held to be too great that might conduce to such a glorious issue, For brave men to falter, or to shrink from any danger, in such a cause, were the basest cowardice. To men, who felt and reasoned thus, it is not surprising that their overwrought imagination concealed from them the danger of such an enterprise, and the possibility of failure. Secret societies had been formed, under the designation of United Irishmen. At first, the objects of these societies had been perfectly legitimate, but as the more ardent and visionary of the members that swelled their ranks came ultimately to control their counsels, nothing else was aimed at than the total subversion of the British power, and the establishment of a free republic in Ireland. So rapidly did these societies increase, especially when the Romish population began to pour into their ranks, with the concealed purpose of securing through their agency Romish ascendancy in Ireland, that in the course of a very few years, the immense majority of the adult male population of the island had become members of the association. The enthusiasm rose with their constantly increasing numbers. Nothing seemed impossible to a united people ; let but one bold stroke be struck, and the British yoke is shivered into fragments, and Ireland's freedom won. So came about the rebellion of '98.

It was finally arranged that the outbreak should commence on the 24th of May, and, as in 1641, the intention of the conspirators was to begin with the seizure of Dublin Castle and the capture of the Privy Council. But the government, being apprised of their design, took such precautionary measures that they were compelled to abandon this part of their programme. In the North, the rising was confined to the Counties of Down and Antrim. One insignificant action

in Antrim and three in Down, sufficed to exhaust the courage of the insurgents. The only action in Down of any importance took place at Ballynahinch, on the 13th of June, when many of the insurgents, some accounts say five hundred, were killed, and the rebellion in Ulster effectually suppressed. In the South, the insurrection assumed more formidable proportions, and was confined chiefly to the County of Wexford, which includes the south-eastern corner of the island. As the real object of the outbreak in this part of the country was entire separation from England and the extermination of Protestantism, it was signalized by a series of atrocities that vividly recall the memory of the worst scenes of '41, and reveal in its darkest colours the infernal element that lies concealed in the Irish nature. A Roman Catholic priest, Father John Murphy, of Boolavogue, was at the head of the insurgents, and with a priest for a leader, and a horde of poor, ignorant, blinded Romanists for his battalions, it was not to be expected that the least mercy would be shown to Protestants. The work of carnage began on a Sunday morning, when a Protestant clergyman named Burrows and seven of his parishioners who had fled to his parsonage for safety, were brutally murdered in cold blood, his son mortally wounded, his home sacked and then burnt to the ground. "Leaving Mrs. Burrows with her niece and four children sitting among the bleeding bodies, beside her dead husband and dying boy," the savage horde marched across the country towards the palace of the Protestant bishop, intending to repeat the tragedy of the morning, and pausing only to set fire to such Protestant dwellings as lay on their way. Happily the inmates of the palace had found safety elsewhere, but the building itself was sacked and then given to the flames. Father John was here joined by another priest, Father Michael Murphy, of like savage temperament and character. With a force now swollen to several thousands, the two priests gave themselves with

eagerness to their congenial work, sacking and burning houses and killing every Protestant they were able to identify. On the following Thursday they marched at the head of their motley battalions to Vinegar Hill, which they made their standing camping ground. Here religion was mingled with the most savage brutality. Twenty priests said mass every day at different points of the camp, and as often "a holocaust of Protestants was offered to the national divinities." That the regular supply of victims might not be wanting, gangs of ruffians were sent out to scour the country, and bring in every Protestant they could find. In this way, four or five hundred Protestants, whose only crime was the religion they professed, were inhumanly butchered.

Terrible as were the scenes of butchery and blood that now occurred here daily, they were a short time afterward exceeded by scenes, if possible, still more revolting.

On the 20th of June, a column of pikemen crossed Wexford Bridge, carrying a black banner with a red cross in the centre, which they planted on the Custom House Quay. Drink was served out to them, though they little needed its maddening influence to convert them into fiends more ferocious than tigers. Three hundred Protestant prisoners, including country gentlemen, magistrates, merchants, clergymen, tradesmen, confined at the time in the public gaol, supplied a safe and convenient prey to these infuriated and merciless ruffians. Of the unhappy captives, ninety-seven, whose only offence was that they were Protestants, were ceremoniously and deliberately murdered. That the insatiable appetite of their inhuman slayers for Protestant blood might enjoy the gratification of a more protracted indulgence, the victims were dealt with separately. They were first taken, one by one, from the gaol, then, after a mock trial, led out to the Bridge. Here the hapless victim was stripped naked, and then placed upon his knees in the middle

of the road. Two pikemen took a position in front of him, and two behind him. They knelt, said a prayer; then levelling their pikes, they rose, ran upon him, caught him on the points of their pikes, held him aloft, and then pitched his writhing and bleeding body over the parapet into the stream below. So went on the bloody work through a long midsummer day, till seven o'clock in the evening, when a priest at last interfered, at the risk of his own life, and insisted that it should stop. It is probable that even his generous interference would have failed, had not, at that instant, an express come in to say that the English army was getting the better of their friends at Vinegar Hill, and that every man able to fight was needed in the field. The intelligence struck the guilty wretches with consternation and alarm. Imagining that they already saw the hand of the doom they justly deserved stretched out to seize them, they fled in terror from the scene, leaving the prisoners who had been in momentary expectation of immediate slaughter, in bewildering astonishment at the suddenness of their flight. The next day, the rebels were driven in defeat and disaster from Vinegar Hill, and on the evening of the same day Wexford was occupied by the king's troops, and the surviving prisoners delivered from captivity.

In the end of May, the insurgents formed another camp at Carrickbyrne Hill, about six miles from New Ross which stood on the Wexford bank of the Barrow. From this as a centre of operations, they made raids into the surrounding country and took many Protestants prisoners, whom they confined in the buildings of a homestead at the foot of the hill, belonging to a Captain King, called Scullabogue. Here, one hundred and eighty-four prisoners, chiefly old men, women and children, who had been taken because they were too helpless to escape, were shut up in a

barn thirty-four feet long and fifteen feet wide. From thirty to forty others were imprisoned in the dwelling house. On the 5th of June, in an encounter at New Ross with the Royalists, the rebels were defeated, with the loss of two or three thousand men. Hardly had the action commenced, when a party of the insurgents, cowards as well as savages, rushed from the field to Scullabogue, declaring that the day was lost, and that they had brought orders for all the prisoners to be immediately put to death, as they might otherwise be dangerous. Those who were confined in the dwelling house were at once brought out, and shot upon the lawn. "The standers-by stabbed them with their pikes as they fell, and licked the blood from the points." A still worse fate awaited those in the barn. Fire was set to the thatch; soon the whole building was wrapt in flames, and in a few minutes all that remained of the unfortunate prisoners was one hundred and eighty-four charred and blackened bodies. "One little child crawled under the door, and was escaping. A rebel ran a pike into it as a peasant runs a pitchfork into a cornsheaf, and tossed it back into the flames."

An insurrection conducted with such appalling barbarity could not hope to succeed. A well deserved retribution speedily overtook the guilty participants. The leaders were either killed in battle, or seized and afterwards hanged. Father John Murphy fled from Vinegar Hill, when the day was lost; but shortly afterwards he was taken, and, on the 26th of June, paid on the gallows the just penalty of his many and great crimes. Thousands of the poor, ignorant people, who had been betrayed into rebellion by the leaders of the movement, perished either in battle, or, when the battle was over, by the hands of the infuriated soldiery who could not be restrained in the hour of victory from slaking their vengeance in the blood of the merciless hordes who

had not hesitated to indulge with savage glee in wholesale murder.

The Presbyterians have often been stigmatized as the instigators of this rebellion, and it is not difficult to understand how the groundless and unmerited accusation has come to be preferred. They constituted the overwhelming majority of the volunteers, who did much, as we have already seen, to set on foot the political agitation which eventually culminated in the outbreak. The society of United Irishmen, that ultimately rose in arms, had its origin in Belfast, where they were, as they still are, the large majority of the population, and found its earliest and most active partisans among members professedly of their communion. When the rebellion broke out, a considerable number of the Presbyterian laity as well as a few Presbyterian ministers were active participants in the foolish and abortive undertaking. But, it should be remembered, that at this dark and melancholy period in the history of Ireland, religion was at a very low ebb. Never had the Presbyterian Church exhibited so wide a departure from the purity and zeal of her earlier days. The Established church was in a still worse condition. Infidel sentiments pervaded the entire community. Paine's "Age of Reason," and "Rights of Man" were in extensive circulation. Those of the Presbyterians who adhered to the society of United Irishmen, and were active in promoting its objects, belonged, for the most part, to the New Light party, and, in keeping with the prevailing spirit of the times, allowed their regard for political reform to override their better judgment. The society they took an active part in establishing, and in the promotion of whose objects they zealously engaged, when first instituted in 1791, contemplated purposes strictly legitimate. It aimed mainly at parliamentary reform, the need of which at the time will be at once seen, when it is

stated that the voice of the people had no share whatever in the election of at least three-fourths of the members of the House of Commons. And it sought to secure this legitimate object by the harmonious co-operation of all classes of Irishmen, irrespective of race or creed. As long as the society moved within strictly constitutional limits, it commanded the support of a large portion of the Presbyterians of Ulster; but when, four years after its first organization, it became secret, seditious and revolutionary, aiming at the subversion of the British power, and the establishment of a republic in Ireland, most of them abandoned its ranks, and became active members of the Orange Association, which, formed in 1795, rendered signal service to the State in counteracting the treasonable designs that now began to convulse the country. The few who declined to abandon its connection, and allowed themselves to be borne into the vortex of rebellion, were doubtless sincere but misguided men, who, in the ardent admiration of visionary theories regarding the rights of man, vainly imagined that the cause they sought to support was fraught with blessings to their country. It had been well for themselves and their country, if in this time of wide-spread disaffection, they had listened to the wise councils of the church to which they professed to belong. The Synod of Ulster, at its annual meeting in 1793, when an uncontrollable mania for revolutionary projects was beginning to make itself painfully manifest, declared, without a dissentient voice, that "they felt themselves called upon explicitly to avow and publish their unshaken attachment to the genuine principles of the British constitution—an attachment early inculcated by the lessons of their fathers, and since justified by their own observation and experience." And, whilst expressing their desire for parliamentary reform as members of civil society, they declared that "in seeking this reform, *they will not be seduced by the*

visionary theories of speculative men, but, taking the principles of the British constitution for their guide, they will cooperate with their fellow citizens by *all constitutional means*, to obtain this great object, *rejecting with abhorrence every idea of popular tumult or foreign aid.*" In '98, when the rebellion had spent its force, and the landing of a formidable French force at Killala had enkindled the fear of another and more formidable outbreak, the Synod, at a special meeting held at Lurgan, renewed its declaration of loyalty to the Crown, and its strong disapprobation of those of its communion who had been guilty of rebellion. It also made a gift of £500 to the government, "as the contribution of the members of the body towards the defence of the kingdom," enjoining, at the same time, the several Presbyteries, under a penalty of severe censure, to institute a solemn enquiry into the conduct of ministers and licentiates charged with "seditious and treasonable practices," and to report to the next annual meeting, and issuing an address, to be read from every pulpit within its bounds, in which, "Whilst we lament," say they, "the late disturbance of the public peace, we derive no small satisfaction from the conviction *that the great body of the people, with whom we are connected have given, by their conduct, the most decisive proofs how greatly they condemned all acts of violence.*" Two years before the insurrection took place, the government, in the disturbed state into which the country had lapsed, organized a body of yeomanry, composed exclusively of men of known and approved loyalty, to aid the regular forces in the preservation of the public peace. In the Counties of Armagh, Tyrone, Fermanagh and Derry alone, the newly organized body, when the insurrection took place, amounted to fourteen thousand men, of whom, at least, three-fourths were Presbyterians. The majority of the leading conspirators were, nominally, Episcopalians. Not a single minister of the Secession body

was accused of treason, and of the two hundred ministers on the roll of the Synod of Ulster, only eight were convicted of complicity in the rebellion. In proportion to its extent, the Presbytery of Antrim was much more deeply implicated. Two of the ministers belonging to this small body were obliged to leave the country, and a third was kept for some time in imprisonment. The Covenanters were quite as much involved. They had only eight or nine ministers in Ireland at the time, and of these, two or three were more or less compromised. As a body, however, they were eminently loyal. When the insurrection was finally suppressed, of the twenty State prisoners who were sent to Fort George, in the North of Scotland, ten were Episcopalians, six, Presbyterians, and the remainder, Romanists.

It was well for Ireland that this unhappy movement proved a failure. Had it succeeded, it would have placed a serious barrier in the way of its future progress, reducing its Romish population to deeper and more degrading political servitude by practically placing its government in the hands of their priesthood, endangering the very existence of Protestantism, in the maintenance and spread of which lay the chief hope of its future elevation, driving capital and the men of energy and enterprise from its shores, and thus greatly aggravating all the evils of its condition, especially the pauperism that, even under the most favourable circumstances, has been so widely prevalent throughout a large portion of its area.

It has been already stated that, in 1751, the number of congregations in the General Synod of Ulster amounted to one hundred and fifty-seven, and that of the Presbytery of Antrim to thirteen. During the prevalence of New Light principles, church extension made little progress. In the twenty years preceding 1789, not a single congregation had been added to the roll of the General Synod. Notwithstand-

ing the political agitation, ending in civil war, that existed throughout the remainder of the century, the progress made was considerable. When the century closed, the congregations of the Synod and the Presbytery of Antrim combined, numbered one hundred and eighty-six. Though, at this period, the standard of education for the ministry had been greatly reduced, the church could number in its ranks several men of distinguished ability, able to sustain her reputation for scholarship and talent, if not for orthodoxy, with an effectiveness worthy of the best days of her history. In 1786, Dr. Woodward, the bishop of Cloyne, published a pamphlet, in which he undertook to establish the proposition, that the members of the Established church alone could be cordial friends to the entire constitution of the realm with perfect consistency of principle. As his proposition virtually challenged the loyalty of all who did not belong to the communion of the Established Church, his pamphlet attracted much attention, and evoked a number of replies. Of these, by far the ablest was written by the Rev. Dr. Campbell, the Presbyterian minister of Armagh, entitled "A vindication of the principles and character of the Presbyterians of Ireland." In this seasonable and effective publication, the Armagh divine had little difficulty in showing to a demonstration, that the Presbyterians had always been, often in the face of the strongest provocation to the contrary, the foremost and most unwavering supporters of the British constitution, whilst Prelacy, which its friends were wont to boast of as essential to the safety of the State, had more than once brought it to the verge of ruin. To this work, the Rev. Dr. Stock, an ex-Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, replied in a publication in which he endeavoured to fasten upon the Presbyterians the charge of intolerance. To this rejoinder Dr. Campbell published an extensive and exhaustive answer, in which he triumphantly maintained

the position he had taken in his first work, and vindicated his church from the imputation with which she had been recklessly assailed, and with such power and effectiveness, that his learned assailant was obliged to retire from the contest.

During the heat of this controversy, a theological discussion of a different character took place between the Seceders and the Covenanters. Both admitted the continued obligation of the national covenants; but the Seceders alone of the two parties acknowledged the existing civil government, the Covenanters refusing to acknowledge the authority of any but a covenanting king. The question that divided the two bodies had been often keenly discussed, but now a combat of a more public character was to be held to sift its merits. A *viva voce* discussion was appointed to be held in the neighbourhood of Ballybay, Co. Monaghan, in which the Rev. John Rogers, a minister of the Secession body, and Mr. James McGarragh, a licentiate of the Reformed Presbytery, should uphold the views of the respective bodies as best they could. On a platform erected in the open air, in the presence of assembled thousands, the two warlike combatants fought for victory for a long day, with as much eagerness as if the whole fate of christianity itself hung suspended on the issue. It would be a vain task to attempt to describe the changing fluctuations of the bloodless conflict, as the two antagonists hammered away at each other with might and main during that summer day. Suffice it to say, that, in the end, both parties clung more tenaciously than ever to the principles they had previously espoused.

CHAPTER XIII.

FROM 1800 TILL 1829.

Union with Britain—Protestants generally favourable to—Efforts to conciliate the Roman Catholic hierarchy and clergy—Increase in the Regium Donum—New mode of distribution—The Seceders favoured with a like increase—Signs of renewed life in the church—English evangelists in Ulster—Dr. Carson—Committee appointed to provide for the increased circulation of the Scriptures—Dr. Cooke—Brief sketch of his life—His battle with Arianism—Smithurst—He follows him, wherever he goes—The battle in the church courts—Synod at Strabane—At Cookstown—Dr. Montgomery—Excitement increased by the appointment of a professor in the Belfast College, suspected of holding Socinian views—Synod at Lurgan—Cooke and Montgomery—Arianism driven out of the Synod—Value of Dr. Cooke's services to the church—The Covenanters—Unqualified subscription to the Westminster standards—Renewal of intercourse with the mother church in Scotland—Union between the Synod of Ulster and the Seceders—Bi-Centenary celebration.

THE opening of the present century was signalized by an event of the utmost significance and importance to Ireland, and hardly less so to the rest of the Empire. Scarcely had the rebellion been suppressed, when the question of a legislative union between Great Britain and Ireland began to attract public attention. In Cromwell's time, such a union had been effected with the happiest results. At the Restoration it had been abandoned, but the remembrance of its benefits still lingered in the public mind, and led some of the more thoughtful of the Irish people to cherish a desire for its renewal. In the early part of the last century, this desire became widespread, and in 1704, the Irish Parliament presented a memorial to the crown, praying for a firm and strict union with England. Such a political constitution had been already arranged between England and Scotland, and it would have been an eminently wise and salutary proceeding if Ireland had

been included in its provisions. But the English manufacturers and merchants, imagining they saw in free commercial intercourse between the two countries the certain ruin of their interests, threw difficulties in the way, and the prayer of the Irish legislature was disregarded. No more unfortunate occurrence could have taken place. It lost to England the best opportunity that has ever arisen for binding the two countries together in ties of firm and enduring friendship. Had Ireland been admitted to the enjoyment of free trade, and all the advantages of English citizenship, the two countries, united by identity of interests, would soon have become one in aim and sympathies. English capital would have found in Ireland a safe and profitable investment, the natural resources of the country would have been developed, industries that supply labour and create wealth would have been multiplied, and the island, in consequence, enriched by constant accessions to its riches and prosperity, would long ago have abandoned its disloyalty and turbulence, and become as contented and law-abiding as either England or Scotland. When the project was now revived, the opposition came from Ireland itself. Under the mistaken apprehension that all its material interests, as well as its national dignity, would suffer by the proposed scheme, it shrank from a closer union with the larger and more powerful kingdom on the other side of the channel. The discussion which a measure of such importance provoked had not proceeded far until it became evident that the government were resolved on carrying it. The Protestant portion of the population, with few exceptions, was strongly in its favour. The Episcopalians, justly regarding the project as certain if accomplished, to lend additional security to the existence of the National Church, gave it cordial support. The Presbyterians, looking forward to the United Parliament in London with a measure of confidence and regard they had never been able to accord

to an Irish legislature, because they saw in it an influential Scotch element, that might presumably be relied on for the protection of Presbyterian interests, were not unfavourable to the scheme. The chief opposition was to be expected from the Romish hierarchy and priesthood ; but the government succeeded in disarming their hostility by holding out to them the prospect of early relief from the repressive measures that still bore heavily on the Romish communion, as well as of a State provision for the maintenance of the Romish religion. Though no opposition was likely to be offered by the ministers of the Presbyterian Church, the government, desirous to conciliate their support, encouraged them to hope for an increase of the Regium Donum, and the establishment of a university at Armagh, in which their candidates for the ministry would be educated. Still, it was in parliament that the question was to receive its final and conclusive settlement. In the House of Lords, the project encountered hardly any opposition ; but in the House of Commons it was only carried after a hard fought battle, in which the combatants on both sides exerted themselves to the utmost. On the final division the vote stood, in the Upper House, 76 to 17, and in the Lower, 153 to 88. On the 1st of August, 1800, the bill received the Royal assent, and on the 1st of January, 1801, the two islands, long united under one crown, were united under one legislature. The Union was carried, it is well known, by the grossest bribery and corruption, but, none the less has it proved of immense advantage to Ireland. Unsatisfactory as is the condition of that country to-day, it is far in advance of what it was when it was consummated ; and it will be immeasurably in advance of what it is to-day, when the Irish people shall have learned to turn a deaf ear to the disloyal counsels of the sordid and selfish agitator, and to seek in the paths of peaceful industry and honest rivalry,

the road to progress and prosperity. Great Britain is, at once, their natural and best ally, and an intelligent regard to the true interests of their country should constrain them to seek by all legitimate means to strengthen rather than to sever the bonds that make them an integral part of an Empire, that, for wealth and power, love of liberty and reverence for religion, stands unrivalled among the nations of the earth. The lachrymose whinings over the loss of their nationality and independence alleged to have resulted from the union, in which their blatant orators are wont to indulge, are merely the vapid frothings of charlatan politicians, seeking for the basest purposes to play upon the prejudices of an ignorant and excitable populace. The Union could not deprive them of nationality, for a nation, in the proper sense of the term, they never were ; and instead of curtailing it largely increased their freedom. Under the shelter of its protection they enjoy the widest liberty ; and if they are still obliged to submit occasionally to legislation of a restrictive and repressive character, it is because they have not yet learned to disregard the misleading harangues of a race of traffickers in sedition and crime that seems to be indigenous to their soil.

In their determination to carry the Union, the government were profuse in issuing bills of promise, but when the day of payment came, they were not equally prompt in redeeming them. The promise to the Presbyterians to establish a university at Armagh, in which their candidates for the ministry might be educated, was quietly abandoned, but the engagement to increase the Royal bounty was ultimately fulfilled. When the proposed augmentation was first publicly announced, it was hailed with the liveliest satisfaction on all hands, as it was found to be the largest addition by far that had ever been made to the grant. But when full particulars came to be known, the satisfaction with which its first

announcement was hailed under went considerable diminution in many quarters. Hitherto, the church had been allowed to manage the endowment as she saw fit, and with a few exceptions, in which discrimination was made in favour of weak frontier congregations, the principle of an equal appropriation had regulated its distribution. But now the government took the matter into its own hands, and undertook to appoint an agent, who, it may be here mentioned, was always a minister of the church, at a yearly salary of £400, to distribute the endowment according to a plan arranged by itself, in which the congregations were divided into three classes, according to their numerical and financial strength, and were to receive respectively £100, £75, and £50 per annum. As the new plan of distribution discriminated in favour of the stronger and wealthier congregations, it produced no little dissatisfaction among the poorer and weaker, but the ministers as a body came ultimately to acquiesce in it gratefully, for whilst, in many cases, their appropriations were more than trebled, in no case, did they fall much below double the largest they had ever previously received. The Seceders did not share in the augmentation, yet, though the new regulations concerned the Synod of Ulster and the Presbytery of Antrim alone, they were loud in their denunciation, and eagerly took advantage of the dissatisfaction they produced in many congregations. Some of them went even so far as to say that if the government were to propose to extend to them a like favour, they would meet the proposal with a prompt and indignant rejection, if it were accompanied with the objectionable classification arrangement. Neither their consciences nor their principles, they alleged, would allow them to accept it. But when the hour of trial came, their principles and their consciences alike were found to be of a more pliant and yielding character than they imagined. A few years afterwards, in response

to their repeated and urgent application, their endowment was also largely increased. On the plea that their poverty, not their will consented, they readily accepted the offered boon, though it was accompanied with the classification principle, rendered still more objectionable by its being arranged on a lower scale, the three classes into which their congregations were arranged receiving respectively, £75, £50, and £40 annually. One of the ministers of the body, however, was more loyal to principle and conscience. The Rev. James Bryce, Aghadoey, near Coleraine, refused to share in the grant on the terms of the new arrangement, and became the founder of a small sect, on the basis of the voluntary principle, which has never been able to attain to much beyond a barely visible existence. In 1838, the government abandoned the obnoxious classification system, and, on certain conditions, agreed to grant £75, Irish currency, to all the ministers of both Synods.

The opening of the present century witnessed the commencement of a new and happier era in the history of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Symptoms of a revived life and of an early return to evangelical principles began to manifest themselves in many quarters. Throughout all the darkness and deadness of the previous century, there never had been wanting a few Elijahs who had steadfastly refused to bend the knee to the reigning idols. The number of such faithful and zealous ministers of the word had now increased considerably, and, as the century advanced, fresh accessions were constantly made to their ranks till, long ere it had completed the one half of its course, the church held in her service a ministry that, for soundness in the faith, learning, and piety, have rarely been exceeded in any branch of the church of Christ. Other causes contributed to the revived life that now began to thrill her half-lifeless form. In 1798, an Association was formed at Armagh,

under the designation of "The Evangelical Society of Ulster," for the purpose of establishing a system of itinerant preaching throughout the towns and villages of the province. A few of the ministers who were active members of this society belonged to the Established Church, and a like number to the Synod of Ulster, but most of its clerical supporters were connected with the Secession body. The society was strictly non-denominational, and aimed exclusively to promote the interests of true religion among the people. To aid in carrying on its work, the Association applied to the London Missionary Society for itinerant preachers. The application was cordially entertained. The preachers sent did much to promote the great object the society had in view. Though it professed to maintain a strict neutrality in regard to denominational interests, as the agents employed were, for the most part, connected with the English Independent body, congregational principles began to find a foothold in Ulster. Several of the Secession ministers, who had been brought into close intercourse with the English preachers, withdrew from that body, and became pastors of Independent congregations. The only minister of the Synod of Ulster who followed their example was the Rev. Alexander Carson, one of the ablest ministers it could count on its roll. In 1798, Mr. Carson was ordained to the pastorate of the Presbyterian congregation of Tobermore; in 1805, he adopted the system of the Baptists, and left the Presbyterian fold. He was an able, evangelical, and successful minister of the word, and as an author won high distinction. His treatise on Baptism, its Mode and Subjects, is probably the best defence of the peculiar views of the Baptists that has ever appeared. Congregational principles, however, have never made much headway in Ireland. Episcopacy and Presbytery still continue to divide the Protestant population of the kingdom,

the Presbyterians predominating largely in Ulster, and the Episcopalians in the other provinces.

The great majority of the Presbyterian people of Ulster had never abandoned their attachment to the creed of their fathers; but they now began to manifest a deeper interest in evangelical truth. As vacancies occurred in the congregations of the Synod of Ulster, a very decided preference was shown for orthodox candidates. Happily the Synod, about this time, took a step which tended very materially to strengthen their revived interest in a pure gospel, and to hasten the new Reformation that had now set in. At the annual meeting in 1809, it appointed a committee to devise means for supplying bibles on easy terms to the humbler classes within its communion, and the unexpected success that attended the effort bore witness to the restored life that was now beginning to lift the church up out of long-existing deadness and formality, and to start her on a career of renewed and greatly increased usefulness. The new scheme was not a spasmodic and temporary movement, born of a sudden impulse and as suddenly expiring. On the contrary, it was steadily and successfully maintained for years till the formation of the Hibernian Bible Society, with a similar object, but on a much more extensive scale, superseded the necessity for its existence. About this time also, a missionary spirit began to make itself very decidedly manifest in the Synod; but, as we purpose devoting a chapter exclusively to the missionary work of the church from the earliest years till the present time, we shall say nothing further at present in regard to this cheering outflow and evidence of the revived life that now, in various ways, like the first streaks of dawn, was giving promise and assurance of the near approach of a brighter and better era in its history.

When the Almighty has a great work to be done, he

never fails to provide suitable instrumentality. When he proposed to restore to christendom the gospel which had become overlaid and hidden by Romish corruptions, he raised up Luther, in Germany, Calvin, in France, Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley, in England, John Knox, in Scotland and others, elsewhere, whom he qualified for the great undertaking. And now when he graciously purposed to bless the Presbyterian Church in Ireland with a much needed Reformation, he gave to her a Reformer whom he endowed with every qualification necessary for the successful accomplishment of the work.

In the year 1788, and at a time when the Presbyterian Church in Ireland was drifting towards the farthest point in her declension, there was born within her communion a child that was destined in years of manhood to lead her back from her wanderings, and to restore her to her ancient purity and zeal. The name which the new-born child received in baptism was Henry Cooke, a name that ere long came to be a household word in the homes of Ulster, and that will never cease to be pronounced with reverence in every section of evangelical christendom. Horace, in one of his immortal odes, describes himself as "*ex humili potens*," that is, rising to his greatness from a lowly degree. The same description is applicable to Henry Cooke. His father was a small farmer, and of English origin, being "descended from a family of English Puritans, who, early in the seventeenth century, left their native Devonshire, in the train of the Hills and Conways, and settled in County Down." His mother was a Howie, of the same stock as the author of "The Scots' Worthies," and a woman of more than ordinary force of character, intelligence, and piety. He was born at a place called Grillagh, near Maghera, in the county of Derry. Two other distinguished divines were born in the same locality, namely Dr. Adam Clarke, author of a well known

commentary on the scriptures, and Dr. Alexander Carson to whom we have already had occasion to refer. When a mere youth he entered the University of Glasgow, and, before he had fully completed the twentieth year of his age, he had gone through the entire college curriculum then required from entrants into the ministry of the Irish Presbyterian Church. A few months after leaving college, he was ordained to the pastoral oversight of the congregation of Duneane, near Randalstown, County Antrim, and, in 1811, three years after his settlement at Duneane, he received and accepted a call to Donegore, near Templepatrick, in the same county, where he laboured with much diligence and success for seven years.

Henry Cooke was a born orator, naturally gifted with every qualification required to make a powerful and persuasive speaker. He possessed a voice of the richest and most varied compass, a striking and impressive appearance, a dignified and stately demeanour, a vivid and fertile imagination, a keen and penetrating intellect, a memory that seemed never to let go any thing it once got hold of, an inexhaustible vein of humour, a marvellous power of sarcasm, and a heart ready to respond to emotions of the deepest and most diverse character. All his great natural advantages he sedulously cultivated from his earliest years. He read carefully the writings of the great masters of English eloquence, statesmen, poets, and divines, and studied diligently the literature of ancient Greece and Rome. He gave special attention to elocution, and readily acquired remarkable ease and grace of gesture, and such mastery of his voice that, without any apparent exertion, he could make himself heard by the largest audience. It is not surprising, therefore, to learn that when he became a minister of the gospel, he speedily attracted public attention, and rose in a few years to a foremost place in the body to which he belonged.

In 1810, an event occurred that revealed more clearly the existence of Arianism in the Synod of Ulster. A minister of the Synod was suspended by his Presbytery for immorality. He appealed to the Synod against the sentence of the Presbytery, and during the hearing of the appeal he avowed himself an Arian. His appeal was sustained, and it was also carried by a majority that, if re-elected by the people, he might be re-instated in his congregation. In a Synod, embracing nearly two hundred clerical members, only seventeen were found willing to protest against this strange decision. It was now placed beyond all controversy that Arianism had spread to an alarming extent in the Synod. One member openly declares himself to be an Arian; a majority see nothing dangerous or reprehensible in the avowal; only seventeen seem to think otherwise.

This event made a profound impression upon the mind of Mr. Cooke. He saw that the church of his fathers, to the ministry of which he had consecrated his life and labours, was in danger of being leavened throughout with error of a most dangerous and destructive character, and he resolved that, with the aid of divine help, he would make an effort to purge it of the fatal poison. His mother had diligently sought to imbue his mind with the knowledge and love of the truth, and all his subsequent studies had only tended to strengthen and confirm his faith in its life-giving principles. These principles found a prominent place in all the sermons that he preached and the cordiality with which they were generally received convinced him that, however far many of the ministers of the church may have wandered from the faith they were supposed to profess, the laity were, in the main, still loyal to its doctrines. He was now beginning to emerge from obscurity, and to be widely known as the ablest and most promising young preacher the church held in her ranks. Yet, he was still a very young man, and as the

leaders of the New Light party were men of distinguished ability, and had the business of the Synod largely in their hands, he felt that he might do more harm than good to the cause he loved by rushing prematurely into the warfare that he now saw lying before him. Preparation was needed, and to preparation he gave himself with an ardour that has seldom been exceeded. Four o'clock every morning found him in his study; but as the duties of a large country parish and the want of books were necessarily serious hindrances, with the consent of his congregation, and the leave of the Presbytery of which he was a member, he returned to college, spending two sessions at Glasgow and one at Trinity College, Dublin. Shortly after the close of these renewed collegiate studies, he was called to the pastorate of Killyleagh, Co. Down, a large country parish, lying along the shores of Lough Strangford, and containing a population almost exclusively Presbyterian, and, for the most part, in very comfortable circumstances. His settlement in this fine parish was most providential. During his ministry hitherto, he had been constantly breathing an atmosphere largely charged with the malaria of New Light scepticism; but now he was brought into close contact with several kindred spirits, of whom Captain Sydney Hamilton Rowan, a leading elder in the congregation, is deserving of special mention. Captain Rowan was a scion of the noble House of Claneboy and Clanbrassil, grand uncle, I may add, of the present Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava. He was as eminent in piety, as he was high in social standing, as well instructed in the Calvinistic theology of the Westminster confession as he was ardent in attachment to its biblical creed. The young pastor of Killyleagh found in this pious and devoted elder an able and judicious counsellor, and in all the great ecclesiastical struggles on which he was soon to enter, he was greatly aided and encouraged by his wise advice and hearty co-operation.

Three years after Mr. Cooke's settlement in Killyleagh, an event occurred that brought him into open conflict with Arianism. The Arian party, perceiving that there was a turn in the tide, and that the light of evangelical principles was spreading with a rapidity that gave promise of complete ascendancy at no distant day, in the hope of imparting fresh life to their waning cause, invited the Rev. T. Smithurst, an English Unitarian minister, to visit Ulster, for the purpose of explaining and advocating their peculiar views. Mr. Smithurst was an able and eloquent preacher, and wherever he went received a warm reception, especially from the wealthier classes. His success seemed assured, but in an evil hour for his mission he ventured to "beard the lion in his den," and announced that he would deliver his next lecture in Killyleagh. The appointed day arrived; a great crowd assembled to hear the doughty apostle of Arianism from the other side of the channel; the lecture delivered was a fine oratorical display; the abettors of Arianism in the locality were jubilant, imagining that they saw at hand the triumph of their principles. But their jubilation soon received a rude shock. Mr. Cooke, who, accompanied by his good elder, Captain Rowan, had been one of the first to put in an appearance at the great gathering, rose as soon as the flashy orator had closed his address, and calmly announced that he purposed, on the coming sabbath, and in his own pulpit, to review and fairly refute by scriptural arguments every dogma that had been advanced that day, closing by inviting the lecturer to be present on the occasion, and by expressing his willingness to meet him in public discussion any where in Ulster, and at any time. The excitement was intense. Ringing cheers greeted the announcement of the young and intrepid defender of orthodoxy, who had already won for himself a high place in the confidence and affections of his flock. Few doubted his competence to accomplish the task

he had undertaken, and all the friends of the truth were delighted with the noble stand he had fearlessly taken in defence of the cause they loved. Sunday came, a great crowd, gathered from far and near, filled the Presbyterian meeting-house in Killyleagh to its utmost capacity, and hundreds who could not find admission clustered around the doors and windows. The sermon was eminently worthy of the occasion. With the impassioned energy of an inspired messenger of heaven, the great preacher took up and tore to atoms every semblance of an argument that had been urged in support of Arian views, and with a force and effectiveness that commanded the admiration of the crowded audience that hung in breathless silence upon his lips, he stated and defended the great fundamental verities of the gospel. As he closed a magnificent peroration by a powerful appeal to his hearers not to forsake the faith of their martyred forefathers, and to rest continually in firm security upon the Rock of Ages,—Jesus the Lord—God manifest in the flesh, the air of firm resolve that gathered around every brow, and the glow of manly enthusiasm that mantled every cheek, showed that the appeal had found a response in every bosom. Few there were in that vast assembly who did not carry away with them a firmer grasp of the truth, a more fixed purpose to stand by it till life's end, as well as a feeling of deep inexpressible thankfulness to the King and Head of the church, who had been graciously pleased to raise up a great prophet in Israel, capable of defending the faith, now more precious to them than ever, against all assailants.

The campaign against error thus auspiciously begun, Mr Cooke was determined to prosecute. Hearing that the imported apostle of Arianism had left Killyleagh and gone elsewhere, he announced his determination to follow him wherever he should go through Ulster and Ireland, and lay bare the dangerous character of his teaching. His declared

purpose he was prompt to execute. "Wherever Smithurst lectured, Cooke followed with a triumphant and withering reply. Every pulpit was opened to him. Thousands crowded to hear him." The spirit of the old days of the covenant was revived. The truth resumed its ancient supremacy in Ulster; the thousands and tens of thousands of its Presbyterian population were roused to such an intelligent appreciation of its value that, like their covenanted sires, they were ready to surrender life itself rather than abandon its life-giving principles. It was truly a day of great things for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. What had been intended for the destruction turned out for the firmer establishment of her ancient creed. The heresy that had stealthily crept into her communion, paralyzing her energies, and impairing her usefulness, received a deathblow from which it has never recovered; her evangelical creed was more firmly implanted in the intelligence and affection of her adherents, and an impulse imparted to her religious activity, that has grown with the coming years and carried her forward to a high place among the living churches of christendom.

The battle had now been fought and won among the people; but a harder battle remained to be fought in the church courts. The New Light party was far from being numerically strong, but it included in its ranks most of the leading men in the Synod. Of these, Henry Montgomery was by far the ablest. In his person, he bore the impress of a king among men, and in his intellectual capacity and mental culture he had few superiors. He was born in the same year as Cooke, and went through his college course at Glasgow at the same time. Shortly after he was licensed, he was settled as pastor of the congregation of Dunmurry, in the neighbourhood of Belfast, where he laboured till his death, in 1865. His distinguished talents and his great power as an orator were universally recognized, and at an

early period he rose to be the leader of the New Light party in the Synod. Cooke's first encounter with Arianism in the Synod was anything but encouraging. Even his brethren of the orthodox party refused to stand by him, and had he been an ordinary man he would probably have relinquished the struggle in despair. But Cooke was no ordinary man. He was determined to drive Arianism out of the Synod, and a temporary defeat had no power to alter his resolution. He had the people with him, and he felt confident that the day would soon come, if the battle were only waged with energy and skill, when he would have the Synod with him too. His influence and popularity were continually on the increase. In 1824, he was elected moderator of the Synod. This in itself was encouraging. It showed that, notwithstanding all the evil things the Arian party had to say of him, he commanded the confidence and esteem of his brethren. At the meeting of the Synod at Coleraine, in the year following he won his first triumph, but it was not till the meeting at Strabane, in 1827, that his first decisive victory was obtained. At this meeting, he moved that the members of the Synod should be called upon to declare whether or not they believed the answer to the 6th question in the Shorter Catechism, affirming the doctrine of the Trinity. The debate that followed began on a Thursday and did not terminate till the following Saturday. Cooke and Montgomery, the leaders of the two parties, delivered speeches of great brilliancy and power. Cooke did not now stand alone. He was ably assisted by Robert Stewart, minister of the congregation of Broughshane, Co. Antrim, who, in clearness and cogency of reasoning and dialectic power, was surpassed by no member of the Synod. The vote, when taken, showed that whatever hold New Light principles may at one time have had upon the Synod, it was now almost gone. Of those present, 117 ministers and eighteen elders voted in

favour of the motion ; two only voted against, and eight others declined voting.

At the annual meeting of the Synod, held at Cookstown in the summer of the following year, the battle was renewed with an earnestness on both sides that showed that the decisive hour of the struggle was near at hand. Cooke was determined that however those members of the Synod who entertained New Light principles should be dealt with, the door should be effectually closed against the admission of others of like sentiments. Accordingly, he proposed that a committee should be appointed to examine candidates for licensure or ordination, with a view to exclude from the sacred office all who either denied the doctrines of the trinity, original sin, justification by faith, and regeneration by the Holy Spirit, or who appeared to be destitute of vital godliness. In support of his motion, he delivered a speech, in which all his great powers shone with unwonted brilliancy. Montgomery followed with a speech hardly less brilliant and powerful. As, at the preceding Synod, Stewart of Broughshane took part in the debate, delivering an address which showed that if wanting in the graces of oratory that distinguished the two great combatants, he was inferior to neither of them in power of close argumentative discussion. Piling argument upon argument he raised around the cause of truth a tower of defence that was absolutely impregnable. The motion was carried by an overwhelming majority in the largest meeting of the Synod that had yet been held in Ulster. A committee, consisting of well known and decided Trinitarians, was appointed to carry out the decision. It was an hour of triumph for Cooke, as well as for the cause he had so persistently and successfully sustained. During the previous six years he had fought the battle in the Synod with unflagging energy. At the meeting held at Newry, in 1822, when he first stepped into the arena, he stood alone.

As succeeding meetings were held, his position became more and more encouraging. And now, the hour of triumph had come. The Arian party must either withdraw from the Synod, or submit to sure and speedy extinction. They chose the former alternative. At a convention held at Belfast, on the 16th of October, 1828, they drew up a remonstrance to be laid on the table of the Synod at its next annual meeting, protesting against its recent action, and announcing their intention, if it were not repealed, to withdraw from the jurisdiction of the Synod, and to form themselves into a separate association. This document was immediately published and circulated all over the country, adding to the excitement that for years had disturbed the quiet of every Presbyterian congregation and home in Ulster. Meanwhile, another event occurred that greatly increased the prevailing excitement. At this time, a long felt want had been supplied, and most of the candidates for the ministry of the church received their education, not as formerly, at one or other of the Scottish Universities, but at an institution that had been some years before established at Belfast. Unhappily, this institution from the first was largely under Arian control, and now, when the excitement ran high, a professor was appointed to the chair of moral philosophy who was strongly suspected of holding Socinian sentiments. Such a proceeding was certain to provoke discussion. When the college was opened, the Synod had agreed to sanction the attendance of its students for the ministry on its classes; and it now became a question whether the sanction should be withdrawn. It was when the prevailing excitement was roused into a yet higher pitch by this appointment, that the Synod of 1829 met at Lurgan in the leafy month of June. Mr. Cooke had been labouring night and day for months previous, travelling over the country, preaching generally twice a day, and devoting a large part of the nights to

correspondence, and the writing of reviews, circulars and addresses. Yet, notwithstanding these multifarious and exhausting labours, he was one of the first to be present. As soon as the preliminary business of the court was over, he moved a series of resolutions challenging the propriety of the recent appointment in the Belfast college. This action brought him into direct collision with his great antagonist, and led to a discussion signalized by displays of eloquence that have seldom been surpassed in any assembly in the world. The Arian party had already sustained several crushing defeats, and knew that one still worse awaited them, unless they could silence Mr. Cooke, or in some way, destroy his influence. Mr. Montgomery, their distinguished leader, shared with them in this sentiment, and summoned all his strength to secure for his party a signal victory at the last moment. In a speech of nearly three hours duration, and of marvellous brilliancy and power, he confined himself mainly to a personal attack of the most damaging character upon the champion of orthodoxy, charging him with uttering contradictory statements at different times and for different purposes, and with making assertions in the Synod at direct variance with his sworn testimony before a parliamentary committee in London; closing with a deeply affecting peroration, in which, in tones of melting tenderness, he contrasted the stormy scenes of earth with the calm serenity of that heaven that, he trusted, would yet receive and welcome to its embrace friends and foes alike. When he sat down, there was, for a time, unbroken stillness. The audience still remained under the spell of the great enchanter, but as they began to breathe more freely, cheers, repeated again and again, burst from the crowded assembly. The Arians were jubilant, and the orthodox party were correspondingly crest-fallen. They knew Mr. Cooke's eminent ability, and had the fullest confidence in his high personal integrity; but

unable at once to cast aside the spell of the amazing and bewildering oratory, the prolonged echoes of which were still lingering in their ears, they gave way for the moment to the gloomiest apprehensions.

When Mr. Montgomery closed his great speech, the synod adjourned for half an hour. During the brief interval, Mr. Cooke was as cool and collected as if nothing unusual had happened. Others were trembling for the ark of God, not he. As he mingled freely in the conversation and pleasantries of the dinner table, he betrayed no symptom of depression or anxiety. "He had no time to prepare a defence. He did not seem even to desire it." In the proud consciousness of the rectitude of his own conduct, as well as of the righteousness of the cause for which he had been battling for years, he calmly awaited the opportunity the reassembling of the synod was sure to give him of defending both alike from the attack of his great antagonist.

When the Synod reassembled, the church edifice was again crowded with an eargely expectant throng. Mr. Cooke immediately arose, and entered upon his defence. His reception at first was any thing but encouraging. Not one friendly voice greeted him with a cheer. But he had not uttered many sentences till the chilling coldness of his first reception gave way to enthusiastic demonstrations of applause, which were repeated again and again with increasing fervour, as one impassioned burst of the most thrilling eloquence after another burst upon the ears of the crowded assembly. Friends and foes alike yielded to the power of the great orator. They laughed, they wept, they cheered in turn. No wonder that they did so. His speech, though altogether unpremeditated, was one of the grandest exhibitions of oratory that ever rivetted the attention or enkindled the enthusiasm of an audience. Many of those who heard it affirmed that they had never till then felt the full power

of eloquence, and that they never could have imagined that the human mind was capable of such an effort, or that human language could have produced such an effect. All the physical energies of the speaker appeared to have come under the mysterious power of an influence heavenly in its origin. His face beamed with a radiance that seemed not of earth. His eye, naturally bright and piercing as an eagle's, shone with an unwonted brilliancy. His voice, always fine and flexible, responding to the varying emotions that swelled within his bosom, fell upon the ears of the enraptured listeners, now, in tones of deepest pathos, soft as the breathing of the summer evening breeze; again, in tones of withering scorn, or scathing sarcasm, or scorching invective, or burning indignation, loud as the cataract or awful as the thunder peal as it rolls among the mountains. He had no notes, yet not a point in the speech of his great antagonist was overlooked. He had no documents, yet his marvellous memory supplied at will all the proofs needed to repel every accusation. His defence was irresistible. The convictions and the sympathies of the Synod and the audience were alike won to his side, and the deafening cheers, prolonged for several minutes, in which they found relief from the strain of their overwrought feelings, when he sat down, proclaimed the final triumph of orthodoxy and his own complete vindication from the atrocious calumnies with which he had been recklessly assailed.

Mr. Cooke's speech occupied more than two hours, and when it closed, the excitement was so intense that it was found impossible to transact any business and the Synod adjourned. It virtually settled the Arian controversy in the Synod of Ulster. Although the final issue was not reached till some months afterwards, the Arians made no attempt to renew the struggle. When the Synod assembled again the next day, the resolutions that had been moved by

Mr. Cooke were carried by an overwhelming majority. Shortly afterwards, the leading Arian ministers met in Belfast and resolved to secede from the Synod. Accordingly they withdrew, and formed themselves into a distinct body, under the designation of "The Remonstrant Synod of Ulster." Though they had long exercised a commanding influence in the Synod, their numerical strength was now insignificant. Of the two hundred and nineteen ministers on the roll of the Synod, only seventeen went out. The out-going party carried with them their endowments and ecclesiastical buildings, but in some cases the majority of their congregations left them and joined the Synod of Ulster. Arianism, at best, is a cold and cheerless negation, with nothing in it to satisfy the reason, or pacify the conscience, or comfort the heart. It robs the Saviour of his high character as a saviour, and makes light of his salvation. It is, therefore, incapable of imparting the faith that "worketh by love, and purifies the heart, and overcomes the world," or of nourishing the hope that "maketh not ashamed." It never was able to make headway among the people of Ulster, and since the secession from the Synod of Ulster, it has almost ceased to exist, the few congregations that still adhere to its standard having, each, dwindled to the shadow of a shade.

Mr. Cooke had now attained his object. The church of his fathers was purged from a deadly heresy. And in a way too most congenial to all his feelings ; nothing that could be justly regarded as tyrannous in its nature had been done. He had laboured long and patiently for this end. When he first entered upon his self-imposed task, he received little sympathy from the friends of orthodoxy, who, reversing the scriptural order, were disposed to give peace the precedence of purity. He had to encounter the full assault of the Arian party that held in its ranks

several of the ablest men in the church. He received less sympathy from the public press. The leading newspaper in Ulster was in the hands of the Arian party, and constantly sought to cover his name with ridicule and calumny. His family was already large and his means limited. His health was sometimes so shattered by anxiety and toil that his life was despaired of. Yet his resolution was never shaken. His courage was sustained by faith in God. "I serve a good master," he wrote to Mrs. Cooke, in the darkest period in the conflict; "it is for Him I struggle. I must bear the cross if I would wear the crown. I am willing, I am ready to spend all, yea every thing, in his service." As the battle went on, friends in increasing numbers gathered around him. And now, the great object for which he had struggled for years with unflagging energy and perseverance accomplished, he occupied the proudest position that ever has been attained by any Presbyterian minister in Ireland. His popularity was unbounded. He was universally and justly regarded as the great agent in effecting the Arian secession. His celebrity as an orator extended over the empire, and wherever he appeared, either in the pulpit, or on the platform, he was sure to attract an overflowing audience. A small country town was felt to be too narrow and obscure a field for his splendid abilities, and, towards the end of the year 1829, he was transferred to Belfast, the metropolis of Ulster, where he laboured for well nigh forty years, growing in usefulness, popularity, and power, as the years rolled on. The year previous, the leading Presbyterian congregation in Dublin unanimously invited him to be their pastor, and every effort was made to induce him to transfer his labours to the capital, but he felt it to be his duty to decline the invitation. The people of Ulster were proud of him, and, as he had spent all his days among them, nothing could induce him to separate himself from them.

It would be impossible to overestimate the value of the work that Dr. Cooke—for he had recently received the degree of Doctor in divinity from Jefferson College in the United States—had now successfully accomplished. Perhaps, the best conception of it may be obtained by a glance at the consequences that speedily followed. The church was blessed with a great revival. The deadness that for long had paralyzed her energies was succeeded by a period of religious activity that far outstripped the best days of her previous history. From 1729 to 1829, the Synod added about seventy three to the number of its congregations. From 1830 to 1840, no less than eighty-three new congregations were erected. From the year 1827, in which the battle with Arianism was evidently approaching a successful termination, till 1837, one hundred and seventy congregations expended over half a million of dollars in the building and repairing of houses of worship. Prayer meetings were generally established, and missions were supported with fresh zeal and liberality. Nowhere have the beneficial results been more signally manifested than in Belfast. When the Arian struggle began there were only two orthodox congregations in the town; now there are at least thirty-five, and if other congregations which, though not on the roll of the Assembly, are thoroughly Presbyterian in doctrine and polity, be added, the number will be found to be somewhere between forty and fifty.

All classes of Presbyterians took the deepest interest in the Arian controversy, and shared in the joy of its successful termination. The Covenanters or Reformed Presbyterians as they are now generally called rejoiced greatly in the triumph of the evangelical cause. Dr. Paul, of Carrickfergus, a leading minister of the body, than whom a sounder divine never lifted a pen on behalf of the truth, contributed materially to the result by publishing a work

entitled "Refutation of Arianism," marked by great cogency and clearness of reasoning, and written in reply to a volume of sermons published by Dr. Bruce, of Belfast, in support of Arian views,—the first volume in which Arian sentiments were openly avowed by an Irish Presbyterian minister since the days of Emlyn. The Seceders shared no less in the general joy. They had abandoned the Synod of Ulster, chiefly on account of the toleration of serious error within its communion, and now they hailed with the liveliest satisfaction the restoration of its declared and unquestionable allegiance to the orthodox standard. They had now grown into one hundred and thirty congregations, and were coming into increased prominence as a body through the eminent ability of Dr. John Edgar, one of their foremost ministers, who, as a divine, a philanthropist, and a temperance advocate, had reached a high place among the distinguished men of his time.

Subscription to the Westminster standards was always the law of the Irish Presbyterian Church; but during the ascendancy of the New Light party the law in many cases was openly set aside. When the church began to throw off the Arian yoke, the law, in every instance, was enforced, but explanations of objectionable phrases in the Confession of Faith were allowed. It was soon found, however, that this arrangement was both useless and inconvenient, as the objections offered were generally of a very frivolous character. Accordingly, the Synod, at a meeting held at Cookstown in 1835, reaffirmed the principle of unqualified subscription. This measure may be said to have completed the doctrinal reformation of the Synod that Dr. Cooke had inaugurated about a quarter of a century previous. It did more. It paved the way for the re-establishment of intercourse with the mother church in Scotland. During the latter part of the preceding century, the mother and her daughter

had become estranged, and so far had the feeling of estrangement been carried, that in 1799 the General Assembly passed a law which had the effect of excluding Irish Presbyterian ministers from the pulpits of the Scottish Establishment. In 1818, the Arian party induced the Synod of Ulster to retaliate, and to declare that the ministers and licentiates of the Church of Scotland should not be admitted to any of its pulpits. This resolution was modified in the following year and made applicable to vacant congregations alone. As the evangelical party began to regain the ascendancy in the Synod, the irritation naturally produced on both sides of the channel by these unfriendly and offensive measures began to give way, and when the Synod renewed the law of absolute subscription, the chief obstacle to the renewal of the old and friendly intercourse was removed. In May, 1836, the General Assembly unanimously agreed to admit the members of the Synod once more to ministerial fellowship. This happy occurrence was followed by an event of still greater interest and importance. The return to the law of unqualified subscription by the Synod of Ulster opened the way for the return of the Secession body. Both Synods began to feel strongly the desirableness of union. As there was really nothing to keep them apart, they felt that they would present a melancholy spectacle of narrow bigotry and sectarian bitterness if they should remain separated. The students under the care of the two Synods were the first to move publicly in the matter. They met and discussed the subject among themselves. They sent memorials, praying for union, to both Synods, at their annual meeting in 1839. Similar memorials from various congregations and from a public meeting consisting of members of the different Presbyterian Churches in Belfast were presented at the same time. The movement required only to be begun to be carried forward to a speedy and successful

issue. Negotiations were immediately set on foot; all preliminaries were easily and satisfactorily settled, and on Friday, the 10th of July, 1840, the Union was happily consummated at Belfast. The Rev. Dr. Hanna, who had been for nearly half a century pastor of the Rosemary Street Church, Belfast, and who had for long been professor of divinity in the Belfast College for the Synod of Ulster, was unanimously chosen moderator, and the united body was constituted under the title of "The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland." The Rev. Patrick Macfarlane, of Greenock, the Rev. James Begg, of Libberton, the Rev. Robert Murray McCheyne, of Dundee, and David Maitland Makgill Crichton, Esq., of Rankeillur, were present as a deputation from the venerable the mother Church of Scotland, and presented her cordial congratulations on the happy event. Scarcely two hundred years before, the first Presbytery had been constituted at Carrickfergus, consisting of five ministers and four elders. Now, this small Presbytery had expanded into a General Assembly, comprising thirty-three Presbyteries, with four hundred and thirty-three congregations under its care, of which two hundred and ninety-two had belonged to the Synod of Ulster, and one hundred and forty-one to the Secession body.

The union, thus happily consummated, was hailed with unmixed joy by the whole Presbyterian population of Ireland, but by none was it welcomed with livelier satisfaction than by Henry Cooke. His high christian character, his extraordinary abilities, his long and zealous labours, had contributed mainly to its consummation. By purging the Synod of Ulster of Arianism he had rendered it possible, and by direct and active exertions for its accomplishment, supplemented by the cordial co-operations of many able men in both bodies, he had made it a reality. The services that he had thus rendered to the cause of Presbyterianism in

Ireland, as well as the services that for well nigh thirty years afterwards he continued to render, entitle him to be held in affectionate and grateful remembrance by Irish Presbyterians, and by all to whom the interests of true religion are precious, as long as the sun and moon endure. The Union he did so much to bring about, by removing jealousies and prejudices that had been growing and gathering strength for well nigh a century, and by uniting into one solid compact body the divided bands of the Presbyterian family, elevated the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to a position of respectability and influence to which otherwise it never could have attained, and invested it with a power for the successful accomplishment of all the purposes for which a church exists, which otherwise it never would have known. From the day of its first plantation in Ulster, it had proved a well-spring of life to the land ; and now, it went forth in immeasurably augmented strength to shed the light of the gospel and to pour streams of enlarged christian benevolence, not only throughout Ireland but throughout many other lands besides, making waste places glad and deserts to rejoice and blossom like the rose.

Five years after the Union was consummated, the Bi-centenary of the organization of the first Presbytery arrived, and it was resolved to celebrate the event by appropriate services. Dr. Cooke, who was Moderator of the General Assembly at the time, proceeded to Carrickfergus, and on the 10th of June, 1842, preached a sermon from the words in the 51st Psalm, from which the Rev. John Baird had preached on the same day of the month, two hundred years before. A yet more practical mode of celebrating the event was adopted in the establishment of a “Bi-centenary Fund,” to aid in the support of weak congregations in the south and west of the kingdom, which speedily rose to the respectable sum of seventy thousand dollars.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CHURCH IN HER MISSIONARY WORK.

Mission work in 1645—In 1710 and 1716—A fund established in 1710—Efforts in 1798-1818-1826-1830—Mission to the Heathen contemplated in 1838—Two missionaries sent to India in 1843—Progress of the work in India—Mission to the Jews—The Colonies—In Spain—At home—Missions generally—Results—Benevolent Societies.

THE Presbyterian Church in Ireland, during the 17th and the 18th century, had a hard struggle for existence, and was necessarily so busily occupied with the important task of strengthening her stakes, that she found few opportunities of engaging in the no less important task of lengthening her cords. Yet, all her history through, she has never ceased to give evidence of the existence of a true missionary spirit within her communion. As early as 1645, and only three years after she had begun to assume a regularly organized form of existence, she engaged in a noble work to impart the knowledge of the truth to the Romanists within her immediate reach; and, in 1710, she engaged yet more earnestly in a similar effort, and sent forth seven ministers and three probationers, all of whom were able to preach in the Irish language, to carry the gospel to the Roman Catholic population of the island. This staff of Irish speaking preachers was increased in 1716 by the addition of three ministers and three probationers, all of whom were appointed to preach in succession in various districts as they should be afterwards directed. A probationer from Argyleshire, Scotland, was also statedly employed as an itinerant preacher. So encouraging was the success that attended these efforts, that the Synod in 1717

cordially adopted the following resolution :—“ Considering it has pleased God in his good providence to countenance and bless our endeavours, to the conversion of some, this Synod will, in an humble dependence on the blessing of God, continue to use their utmost endeavours to further so good a work.” In the same year in which this good work was commenced, a fund was established at Dublin for supporting and propagating the gospel and the principles of Presbyterianism in the south of Ireland, to which liberal contributions were made, and by which the ends in view were materially promoted. In 1798, “The Evangelical Society,” supported chiefly by the Secession body, was organized for the purpose of carrying on a system of itinerant preaching throughout the north of Ireland. In 1826, “The Synod of Ulster Home Missionary Society” was established, which, after a sickly existence of three years, passed away in 1829. In the year following “The Presbyterian Missionary Society” was formed, which possessed much more vitality and vigour than its predecessor. In 1836, the contributions to this society had risen to the respectable sum of \$6,000 for the year. The Secession body signalized the union of the Burghers and Anti-burghers in 1818, by a vigorous effort to plant the standard of Presbyterianism in many districts where it had been hitherto almost unknown.

As yet no effort had been made to send the gospel to the heathen. But, in this respect, the Irish Presbyterian Church was not singular. Up till this time, very little had been done by any of the churches of the Reformation towards the evangelization of the heathen world. Nor need this greatly surprise us. Like the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, these churches had all had a hard struggle for existence. It was through many trials, and in the face of many obstacles that they had at length arrived at a position of stability and strength. All the energies that, in their

struggling condition, they had been able to put forth had been demanded by the home field, or, if they had been directed, to some extent, to other lands, they had been exerted for the purpose of supplying with religious ordinances those of their members who had gone forth from their ranks to find homes there. The field was then the world, as it is now. But this wide field was closed, for the most part, against the entrance of the missionary; and even if it had been as open to his admission as it is to-day, the churches had the wealth neither of men nor money necessary for its successful occupancy. It surely indicates that the great King and Head of the church, aye, and of the nations too, has great blessings in store, in the not-far-off future, for our world and our race, when we remember that as the field has been thrown open for the labours of the missionary, and the facilities for reaching it in all its parts have been immeasurably increased, and the safety of the christian labourer within every section of its vast extent has been made secure, to a very large extent, by the growing and widely extending power of Christian governments, the wealth of the churches has been incalculably increased, and, what is better, the missionary zeal of the churches has received a marvellous quickening, and the number of capable men, who are ready and willing to occupy the waste places, is every year increasing at a rate as astonishing as it is delightful. When Carey went to India, in 1793, the dawn of the modern mission was just breaking. As the present century opened, seven foreign mission societies had sprung into existence, and about 50,000 converts had been gathered into the fold. When Queen Victoria came to the throne there were only ten missionary societies in Britain; now there are not less than twenty-five, and if we include all Europe and America, as many as one hundred. In 1837, there were perhaps 1,000 missionaries, lay and clerical, in

the field, and at most, 600,000 converts. Now, there are some 3,700 missionaries, lay and clerical, and three millions of converts. Then, there were scarcely any native pastors, now there are 2,300 ordained, and 26,000 unordained native preachers. It has been calculated that at the end of the first three centuries of our era, one fiftieth of the race was christianized. Now, after scarce a century of effort, the proportion has risen to one-fourth.

From the time that the Arian party was constrained to withdraw from its ranks, the Synod of Ulster gave increased attention to the subject of the extension of the gospel, both at home and abroad. In 1838, a special meeting of the Synod was held for conference and prayer about missions. At this meeting the ministers of the Synod subscribed \$3,000 to provide for the salary of a missionary, and shortly after the Belfast congregations subscribed a like amount to support another. The Secession Synod "had a little stock of \$1,500, which they cast into the common treasury." In a religious periodical of the day, a student made an appeal to his fellow students, urging them to endeavour to raise \$50 each, in testimony of their interest in the good cause. Before the day of Union came in 1840, two men had been chosen to go to India, and, on the very day on which the Union was consummated, they were solemnly set apart by the newly organized Assembly to the work which they had willingly consented to undertake. From this day forward, the missionary ardour of the church shone out in added brightness. At present she has twenty-three missionaries labouring in the foreign field, seventeen in India, and six in China, of whom nine are females, supported by the Female Association, and engaged for the most part in Zenana mission work in India. The India mission, now carried on for fifty years, has been fairly successful. There are at present in that field ninety-four native christian workers, a communicant's roll of

three hundred and ninety, a native christian population numbering about 2,000, a set of schools, English and Vernacular, in which close on 3,400 boys and girls are carefully educated, all of them receiving instruction in the scriptures. Several churches have been erected, and in some of them, large congregations meet for worship every sabbath ; in two of them native pastors of their own choice have been ordained. Fine high school buildings have also been erected in Surat and Ahmedabad.

The General Assembly, in 1842, resolved to establish a mission to the Jews, and in the following year, the first Jewish missionary was sent out to Palestine, with instructions to co-operate with the missionaries of the Church of Scotland who had been labouring in that field for some time. At present, this mission is confined to two centres, Damascus, in Syria, and Hamburg, in Germany, with two missionaries in each. In this department of her christian work, the church has been favoured with a fair measure of success. In Damascus, where the work is chiefly among the Syrian population, there are one hundred and thirty-six communicants, and twenty-seven native agents, with fourteen schools, and an attendance of eight hundred children. In Hamburg, where 40,000 Jews reside, not to speak of thousands more that visit it from time to time, and in which two missionaries, an evangelist and a colporteur are labouring, there is an organized congregation with sabbath schools, prayer meetings, a Young Mens' Society, and a large band of earnest workers. A workshop has been opened, in which enquirers can find employment while under instruction. Since 1875, no fewer than twenty-two Jews, all young men, have been received into the church, of whom one is a missionary in Hamburg, another is studying for the ministry, and a third is in a seminary preparing to be a colporteur or evangelist.

Irish Presbyterians in great numbers have gone out to

settle in the distant colonies of the empire. The church has followed them with her christian sympathy, and very properly sought to supply them in their new homes with the ordinances of the gospel. In 1847, three ministers and one licentiate offered to emigrate, the Sceretary of State for the Colonies having given encouragement for the emigration of ministers to those distant lands. In 1841, a colonial committee was appointed by the General Assembly to co-operate with the Church of Scotland in sending ministers to the Colonies. It was not, however, till 1849, that the work was begun in earnest. Up till 1864, no less than sixty ministers had been sent out, some to Australia, some to New Zealand, and others to Canada, "helping the infant churches of these lands to lay the foundations of the empires of the future deep and firm in the knowledge and worship of Almighty God." Though the need for effort of this particular kind has, in a great measure, passed away, the Assembly still continues to follow its emigrant children in those distant lands with warm christian affection, and to aid by pecuniary grants the churches that minister to their spiritual wants, in carrying on evangelistic work within their different spheres, and in maintaining colleges for the education of a native ministry.

At the Assembly of 1840, the Board of Missions was instructed to open communication with the French Reformed Church. In 1846, the year of the great famine, \$1,000 were raised for the Continent. In 1855, a committee was appointed to obtain money for the Waldenses, and in the following year, a deputation visited Ireland, and raised \$4,000. In 1856, a joint annual collection was ordered for the colonial and continental missions, which were separated twenty years afterwards, and the collections ordered to be taken in alternate years. In 1870, the Rev. Wm. Moore, was sent as a missionary to Spain, who began work in the Capital, and some time after took a leading part in drawing

up the constitution and creed of what it was hoped would be the Presbyterian Church of Spain. In 1883, Mr. Moore was appointed to take charge of the training college for native pastors in Puerto Santa Maria, which last year was attended by eleven students. By the transfer of two of the missions of the U. P. Church of Scotland, the Irish Spanish mission has been greatly enlarged and strengthened. It now includes four fully equipped stations in the south of Spain, and though the work is peculiarly difficult, it is carried on with great zeal, and in hopeful anticipations for the future.

The money that is now freely contributed to missionary purposes is a most encouraging sign of the times. In 1837, the mission collections of the Synod of Ulster amounted to about \$6,500 ; last year they reached, including donations, bequests, and the proceeds of investments, the large sum of \$160,000. The different Protestant missionary societies of Europe and America raise yearly an amount considerably in excess of \$10,000,000 ! Nor has the expenditure of these magnificent contributions been fruitless. It has been calculated that as a result of modern missionary effort, there are at present 3,000,000 converts, 800,000 communicants, 10,000 stations, and close on 5,000 organized churches. With such facts before us, who can doubt the speedy arrival of the day when "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea ? "

Whilst the Irish Presbyterian Church has diligently prosecuted mission work among the heathen and the Jews, she has not overlooked home claims. Irish-speaking missionaries have been appointed to labour among the Roman Catholics in the south and west; scripture schools have been established in Munster and Connaught; industrial schools also, in which young females, whilst taught to read and made acquainted with the scriptures, are instructed in knitting and embroidery. In addition, colporteurs are employed to carry

the scriptures and books of christian instruction to the homes of the people. The church also supports a sailors' and soldiers' mission, a scheme for aiding weak congregations, an aged and infirm ministers' fund, a society to aid the orphans of ministers and missionaries, and a society of a similar kind, but much more comprehensive in its character, designed to provide for the support and proper up-bringing of every destitute orphan within its pale. This society, since its formation, twenty-five years ago, has supplied 8,543 little helpless ones with all the comforts of a home, and all the blessings of a healthy education. It has at present over 3,000 orphans under its care, and has recently erected an Orphan Training Home at Belfast, the object of which is sufficiently indicated in the name it bears.

CHAPTER XV.

THE CHURCH IN HER EDUCATIONAL MOVEMENTS.

Always Demanded a highly-educated Ministry—Various Attempts to establish a Home College—Belfast Royal A. Institution—Superseded by Queen's College—Increased Liberality of the Government to the Assembly's College—Erection of “The Magee College”—Of “The Presbyterian College,” Belfast—The two united in a Faculty to Grant Degrees in Divinity—The Desire of Knox—The National System of Education—Sabbath Schools—Early Established in Kilmore, Co. Down—Put Under Care of Presbyteries—Yearly Examination—Prizes—Contributions to Missions.

THE Irish Presbyterian Church has always demanded a thoroughly educated ministry to fill its pulpits. During the seventeenth century its clergy, with few exceptions, were natives of Scotland and graduates of Scottish Universities. During the following century they were, for the most, of Irish birth, but educated either at Glasgow or Edinburgh. Various attempts were made, at different times, to obtain a home-trained ministry; but it was not till the present century had reached the middle of its second decade that the desired object was accomplished. Doubtless the ease with which the Scottish Universities could be reached and the strong affection still cherished for the Mother Church were largely responsible for the long delay. Even yet, Irish students find their way to one or other of the Scottish Universities, though home institutions furnish as good a training as can be found anywhere else. As early as 1670, a School of Philosophy for the education of candidates for the ministry was established at Antrim, under the presidency of the Rev. Thomas Gowan, the Presbyterian minister of the parish, a man of great learning and eminent piety. Theology was taught in con-

nection with this institution, from 1671 till 1676, by John Howe, a celebrated English divine, whose works are still in extensive circulation, and who, during those years, resided at Antrim in the capacity of chaplain to Lord Massarene. Schools of a similar kind were subsequently established at Newtonards and Killyleagh, Co. Down ; but it was not till the opening of the Royal Belfast Academical Institution in 1815 that adequate provision was made for supplying the long-felt want. This Institution was erected by the private subscriptions of public-spirited citizens of Belfast, and included a Collegiate and a School department. The Collegiate department was arranged on the plan of the Scottish Universities, and attendance on its classes was sanctioned both by the Synod of Ulster and the Secession Synod. It was sustained mainly by a parliamentary grant, and embraced an efficient staff of Professors who were elected by a Board of Managers and Visitors. Although three-fourths of the large amount expended on its erection was contributed by Trinitarians, from the outset, and throughout its entire history- it was largely under Unitarian control. From this circumstance, it never commanded the full confidence of the Presbyterian Church, and more than one of the keen debates in the Synod of Ulster during the Arian controversy arose out of unsatisfactory appointments to its professorial staff. It must, however, be acknowledged that it did good work in its day. It was professedly non-denominational, but Professors in Divinity, appointed by the several Synods of the Presbyterian Church, were permitted to lecture in its class rooms. It thus furnished a full curriculum of study to candidates for the ministry, and a large number of the present ministers of the Assembly, as well of the foremost Presbyterian divines of our times, were trained within its halls. In 1849, it was superseded by Queen's College, Belfast, which is wholly a Government institution

non-denominational like the institution it superseded, and intended to furnish the youth of the country, irrespective of race or creed, with literary and scientific instruction of the highest grade. As the majority of the students would necessarily be drawn from the Presbyterian community of Ulster, it was confidently expected, when the Government announced its purpose to erect the new College, that in its general arrangements it would be made as acceptable as possible to the Presbyterian Church. This expectation was strengthened when it became known that the Government had at last agreed to deal more equitably with the Presbyterian Church, and to make additional provision for the training of candidates for its ministry by increasing the parliamentary grant to its theological professors, and by the endowment of four new theological chairs. Nor has it been disappointed. The Presidents of the new College have hitherto been invariably selected from the ranks of the ministry of the Presbyterian Church, and a large number of the Professors have been drawn from its members. The Church, therefore, acted wisely when it was resolved to take advantage of the College about to be erected at Belfast for the literary and scientific training of her students for the ministry, and to carry out a purpose that had been long entertained, to erect at Belfast a college of her own for their education in theology. At a special meeting held at Cookstown, in 1844, the General Assembly had resolved on such a step, and, in a short time, the sum of \$15,000 had been subscribed for the purpose. But before final action was taken, an event occurred which led to delay in carrying out the design. In 1848, Mrs. Magee, widow of the Rev. William Magee, Lurgan, died in Dublin, leaving to the Church the large sum of \$300,000, \$100,000 of which were to be expended in the erection and endowment of a College. It was the desire of many leading

men in the Church that this bequest should be devoted to the erection and equipment of the proposed Theological College at Belfast, but the Trustees, to whose management the bequest had been entrusted, saw fit to determine otherwise, and to apply it to the erection of a College in Derry, which should furnish a training in Arts as well as in Theology. Accordingly, they proceeded to carry out their design, but various obstacles having arisen to prevent its early accomplishment, it was not till October, 1865, that "The Magee College" Derry, was open for the reception of students. This fine institution is furnished with a staff of able Professors, and has already done noble service in promoting the cause of higher education in Ulster, and in giving to the Church not a few of her most successful ministers. Through the Royal University of Ireland, with which it is affiliated, it possesses University powers. Since its erection it has received several large bequests, and of late a suite of residences for the professors has been built by the liberality of its numerous friends and supporters.

When it became certain that the Magee bequest would not be available to aid in the erection and equipment of the proposed Theological Hall at Belfast, the movement that had been started in 1844 was renewed. Additional funds were collected, a suitable site was secured, the necessary buildings were put up, and, in December, 1853, "The Presbyterian College" was formally opened by an address by the celebrated Merle d'Aubigne, the Historian of the German Reformation. This College is a purely theological seminary, and comprises a staff of seven professors, all men of mark, and several of whom have won high distinction in the higher walks of Christian authorship. Of late years, it has received a number of splendid bequests; one, a sum of \$50,000 given by the late Adam Findlater, Dublin, for the completion of the College buildings, which was the means of raising nearly

\$55,000 more for the College Endowment Fund. In addition, Mrs. Gamble, widow of the Rev. Henry Gamble, Presbyterian minister of Cloughey, has donated to the College "The Gamble Library," on which she expended \$7,500 in memory of her husband; a fine suite of chambers for the residence of students has been erected as a memorial to the late Professor Gibson, and prizes have been founded to the amount of \$2,000 a year. In 1881, the theological professors of this and the Magee College, Derry, were incorporated by Royal Charter, as "The Presbyterian Theological Faculty, Ireland," and empowered to grant degrees in Divinity. It may be here stated that when the Disestablishment and Disendowment bill was carried in 1869, the Assembly's College, Belfast, received from the Government the sum of \$197,500 in commutation of its interest in the Endowment previously enjoyed.

It was the desire of John Knox that along with the Church a school should be planted in every parish, for the secular and religious instruction of the young. It was not, however, till the great Reformer was more than a hundred years in his grave that his desire was fully realized. In the reign of William and Mary, an Act of Parliament was passed, giving to Scotland a school in every parish throughout the whole kingdom, so far supported by public funds as to render education accessible to even the poorest in the community. The Irish Presbyterian Church has always been animated by a like desire. Throughout all her history, she has zealously sought to encourage and promote education among her people. Looking back over a period of nearly sixty years, and to a time when no public provision was made for the education of the people generally, I can testify from my own personal knowledge that in a large section of County Down, comprising a population almost exclusively Presbyterian, the means of acquiring instruction in those subjects

that must ever form the substance of a common school education lay within easy reach of every portion of the community. I may, I am confident, generalize this statement, and apply it not only to every other section in my native county, but also to every other county in Ulster. The school houses and the school requisites were, it is true, of a very primitive character. The first school that I attended was a thatched cabin by the wayside, with a hole in the middle of the floor for the peat fire in winter, and an opening in the roof directly overhead for the escape of the smoke, which not unfrequently was wayward in its movements, and, to our discomfort, disinclined to make its exit. The moveable desk for the accommodation of those pupils who were sufficiently advanced in their education to be learning to write, and the three-legged "Thistles" (Trestles) on which it rested, when in use, would now form suitable articles for a museum. But the teacher was a man who even now, would rank high in his profession, and few were the lads and lassies in the locality who did not graduate in the humble institution over which he presided. Religious instruction entered largely into the regular exercises of the school. The Scriptures were read daily, and, on Saturdays, when school work always closed at noon, every scholar was required to repeat with becoming reverence the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed. The first hour every Monday morning was devoted to the repetition of a previously specified number of questions in the Shorter Catechism. Schools of this description were common throughout Ulster about sixty years ago, when the Government established the present system of National education, under the operation of which a complete transformation has been effected. The Irish National Schools now present the most complete contrast in all respects to the schools they displaced. For the most part, they are models of elegance; and it is

certain that they have been eminently successful in diffusing the benefits of elementary education throughout the whole of the kingdom. When first established, the system of education that was adopted failed to command the approval of the Presbyterian Church, mainly for the reason that it made no provision for the reading of the Scriptures and the communication of religious instruction. Strenuous exertions were made to get this evil remedied ; and, when all efforts failed, the Synod of Ulster organized an education scheme of its own, which it successfully supported for several years. At length, the claims of the Presbyterian Church were conceded by the Government, and now there are nearly 800 schools which, whilst connected with the National Board and receiving Government aid through that channel, are conducted according to rules and regulations of her own framing, the reading of the Scriptures and the use of the Shorter Catechism entering into the regular exercises. The results of this new and judicious arrangement have been eminently beneficial. The Presbyterian people of Ireland have always been distinguished by intelligence, industry, and orderly habits. The gaols and the poor-houses have never numbered many of their way of thinking among their inmates. The ceaseless political agitation, always tinged, more or less, with disloyalty to the British Crown, that has done much to impede the progress and to mar the prosperity of the country, has never received encouragement at their hands. But at no former period in their history was the percentage so infinitesimally small of those owning allegiance to their principles who could neither read nor write, or their reputation for all that is lovely and of good report higher than at present. Were Ireland wholly Presbyterian, as we hope and trust it will one day become, instead of being, as it has long been, the weakness and disgrace of the Empire, it would be its

strength and glory, the brightest jewel in its Crown, the boast of liberty, the ornament of religion.

Whilst religious instruction is regularly imparted in the common schools in connection with the Irish Presbyterian Church, the Sabbath School has been very extensively employed as a means of contributing still further to the religious and moral training of the young. To Robert Raikes, of England, is usually accorded the honor of having inaugurated the Sabbath School system, but years before Raikes began to engage in the good work, the system was in successful operation in the parish of Kilmore, Co. Down, where it still continues to be prosecuted with growing zeal and earnestness. As early as 1780, Sabbath Schools were held in this parish, often in the open air, and under the shelter of trees or hedges. At present there are about eleven hundred Sabbath Schools under the care of the General Assembly, with a staff of considerably over nine thousand teachers, and an aggregate of nearly 104,000 scholars. In 1862, "The Sabbath School Society for Ireland in connection with the Presbyterian Church" was organized for the purpose of supplying the Sabbath Schools of the Church with books, periodicals, and other requisites, and its yearly issue amounts to nearly 700,000 publications of different kinds. One special feature of this important part of the Church's work is that Presbyteries are charged with its supervision, and required once a year to examine the different Sabbath Schools within their bounds, "so as to test the children's knowledge of the Holy Scriptures and the Catechism." As an encouragement to study, prizes are awarded to the more advanced and proficient of the pupils. Diligent efforts are also made to cultivate a missionary spirit among the Sabbath School children, and it is pleasant to be able to record that their contributions to the cause of missions are yearly becoming an increasingly valuable addition to the missionary funds of the Church.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE LAST FIFTY YEARS.

A new era in the history of the Church—The Marriage Question—The Dissenters' Chapels' Bill—The Potatoe blight—The Manse Fund—The Revival of '59—Disestablishment and Disendowment—Death of Dr. Cooke—The use of instrumental music in public worship—Renewal of intercourse with the Mother Church—Gladstone's Government of Ireland Bill—The Jubilee.

THE union of the Synod of Ulster and the Secession Synod inaugurated a new era in the history of the Irish Presbyterian Church. It raised her to a position of respectability and influence which she had never previously occupied, greatly increased her means and opportunities for usefulness, and stimulated in a very high degree all her religious activities. Whilst addressing herself to the work of missions with a zeal and an energy that seemed to attest the bestowal of a divine baptism, she eagerly sought from this time forward to consolidate her position in the land, that thereby she might be placed in more favourable circumstances for doing her appropriate work as a church, and earnestly endeavored to promote the social, moral, and religious elevation of the people whose welfare in all respects it had always been her aim to advance.

Scarcely had she been ushered into the new and more influential position she now occupied, when an incident occurred which showed that the spirit of intolerant High Churchism was not yet wholly extinguished. In a dispute relative to the title to property, the Armagh Consistorial Court—an Episcopal court—declared a marriage, celebrated by a Presbyterian minister between a Presbyterian and an Episcopalian, illegal. A similar decision, and for a

like reason, was shortly afterwards given in the case of a man charged with bigamy. The question was eventually carried to the House of Lords, and the decision of the Armagh Court was confirmed, three of the six Law Lords who sat upon it pronouncing such marriages legal, and three, illegal. This decision produced immense excitement throughout Ulster. For centuries marriages of the kind had been celebrated; property to an immense extent was involved; the honour and interests of hundreds of families were at stake. Legislation alone could remedy the evil, but when the necessary legislation was sought, through the secret opposition of the bishops in the House of Lords, it was impeded in its course through parliament and delayed for years. Eventually, and largely through the influence of Dr. Cooke, a bill was carried through the legislature which rectified the evil, and placed the ministers of the Presbyterian Church on the same footing as to marriage with the ministers of the Episcopal Church.

When the excitement that the marriage question produced was at its height, another disturbing question arose in which the title to property was also involved. At the time that the Arians withdrew from the Synod of Ulster, they claimed and held possession of churches and endowments originally designed for Trinitarians. In several instances their claim was contested in the law courts, and a decision given against them. They had friends in the Ministry of the day, who, to prevent further litigation, carried through parliament a bill which secured them in the possession of all ecclesiastical property which had been in their occupation for twenty-five years. The Presbyterians of Ulster offered the bill strenuous opposition in its course through the legislature. They felt it to be a serious grievance that property, given by their forefathers for Trinitarian uses, should be devoted to the maintenance and propagation of error so gross as Arianism;

but when the bill legalizing the wrong was placed on the statute book they submitted without a murmur. Though it placed the Arians in the undisturbed possession of much valuable property, it did little to save them from the extinction that now more than ever seems to be rapidly approaching. The few congregations that they still number, were they all gathered into one, would hardly equal in numerical strength one of the largest congregations of the Assembly.

In 1846, a terrible calamity befell Ireland in the potatoe blight, which destroyed the chief article of food of a large portion of the population. The distress that arose in consequence was truly appalling. Thousands and tens of thousands perished miserably, and if government aid and private beneficence in Ireland itself and many other lands besides, had not come to the rescue, the thousands and tens of thousands that were cut off by famine must have swelled into a number immeasurably greater. Among those in Ireland who distinguished themselves in their endeavours to relieve the prevailing destitution, the late Dr. John Edgar, whose name has already received honourable mention in this narrative, is deserving of special notice. In September of this year, he visited Connaught on an evangelistic tour, and as in travelling from place to place, he was brought face to face with the frightful ravages of the famine, all the sympathies of his generous nature were aroused, and he resolved to make an effort for the relief of the poor starving people. For this purpose, he wrote and published a pamphlet, entitled "The Cry from Connaught," in which, after describing the fearful destitution he had witnessed, he made a strong appeal to the people of Ulster on behalf of their perishing fellow-countrymen. The production did credit alike to his highly gifted intellect, and his warm generous heart. The late Dr. D'Aubigne is said to have declared that he would rather have been the author of it than of all the volumes he had ever

written. The appeal met with a generous and speedy response. In a short time, several thousand pounds were placed at his disposal, and this large sum, under his judicious distribution, was the means of carrying joy and comfort to multitudes of sorrowful homes, and of saving thousands of the starving people from a premature grave. The Protestant clergy in the sorely distressed province, as well as in the other sections of the country, were active in their endeavours to relieve the prevailing destitution; but the Romish priesthood generally, whilst diligent in their spiritual ministrations, did little to alleviate the privations of their perishing parishioners. Archbishop Whately, a competent and reliable witness, testifies that "their incomes were spent during the famine, as they were spent before it, and as they are now spent, on themselves, or hoarded till they could be employed in large subscriptions to chapels or convents. And this was not the worst. In many cases, they refused to those who could not or who would not pay for them, the sacraments of their church." At no time since the great rebellion, two hundred years before, did Irish Romanism suffer so great a loss as during the time of this terrible calamity. In the course of a few years, upwards of a million and a-half of its adherents were removed from its ranks by death and emigration. The native Irish have long been urgent in demanding home rule for their country. They forget that they owe to its connection with Britain the deliverance of their race from almost entire extinction at this awful period. The British government generously came to their relief, and expended about ten millions sterling for their benefit. Had they had home rule in all its fulness at the time, and been dependent entirely upon their own resources, comparatively few of them would have been living to-day to demand the severance of the tie that unites them with those whom they have been wickedly taught to regard as "the brutal and bloody

Saxons," but whom they then found to be their best friends.

In 1853, the Assembly entered upon a scheme for providing the different congregations within its bounds with manses and better church accommodation. At the time, little more than one in twenty of its congregations possessed manses, and many of the buildings in which they worshipped, especially in the country districts, were of a somewhat primitive description, possessing no architectural beauty, and little in keeping with the growing wealth and strength of the church, and the more aesthetic tendency of the times. The original intention was to raise \$25,000, \$5,000 of which was to be expended in aiding in the erection of churches, and \$20,000 in helping to build manses. At the suggestion of Mr. John Sinclair, a wealthy Belfast merchant, who offered, in conjunction with a brother of like high christian character with himself, to subscribe \$5,000, the original idea was greatly enlarged, and, within a short time, \$145,000 was raised, Belfast alone contributing one-third of the amount. Through the aid thus obtained, no fewer than one hundred and ninety-six manses and forty-three new churches were erected, whilst the debt on fifty-seven churches was either altogether removed or greatly reduced. Large additions were made to this fund in subsequent years, with the gratifying result that of the 555 congregations now on the roll of the Assembly, 426 are provided with manses, whilst all the ecclesiastical buildings it has aided in erecting exceed in value half a million of dollars. The churches that have been built are not of the barnlike appearance of the old buildings they displaced, but of a high order of architectural beauty, and more in harmony with the sacred uses to which they have been dedicated.

In the early history of the Irish Presbyterian Church, as has been recorded in its proper place, a marvellous work of grace took place, originating in the Six-mile-water region,

County Antrim, and extending eventually to every Protestant section of the province. This remarkable awakening was repeated, but on a much larger scale, in 1859. Beginning at a little prayer meeting in the parish of Connor, in the same county, it spread over all the adjoining district, and like a widening shower in spring, stretched away into several counties in Ulster, pouring down refreshing and reviving influences of the most hallowed character along its entire course. The interest of the people in divine things was marvellously aroused. The churches were crowded, not only on the sabbath, but, in many cases every night during the week. It is unnecessary to describe the strange bodily affections with which, in some instances, it was accompanied. Suffice it to say that the simple preaching of the gospel awoke extraordinary interest and was attended with extraordinary signs of power. The scenes of apostolic times were renewed. Multitudes, many of whom had been living either in habitual neglect of the concerns of eternity or in open and undisguised ungodliness, were awakened to a serious consideration of their spiritual condition, and led to a rejoicing hope of a blessed hereafter. The whole face of society underwent a marked and marvellous change. The zeal and piety of the church rose to an unwonted pitch. The general conduct of the people was immensely improved. Drunkenness was greatly diminished as well as crime in every form. When the 12th of July, the great Protestant anniversary of Ulster, came round, it was kept in many places, not in the usual way, but in the observance of such solemnities as are peculiar to the sabbath. "The number of prisoners for trial at the Quarter Sessions for County Antrim in October, 1859, was exactly one half that of the previous year. At the Ballymena Sessions in April, 1860—when the revival had been at work for twelve months in its central district—there was not a single case

for indictment upon the record. At the Quarter Sessions for Londonderry of the same date there was no criminal business. The Assistant Barrister, in his address to the Grand Jury of Coleraine, adverted to the fact that, in a place where offences had formerly abounded, they were now so rare. How, said he, is such a gratifying state of things to be accounted for? I believe I am fully warranted now to say, that, to nothing else than the moral and religious movement, which commenced early last summer, can the change be attributed."

The doctrines of grace, including the doctrines of election and predestination, are often assailed and represented as unscriptural and hurtful to spiritual life and growth. But it is worthy of special record that it was in the faithful preaching of these doctrines that this great work of grace took its rise and found its development. The salvation that looks for its origin in the free and sovereign grace of God, the provision of its several benefits in the atoning blood of the Redeemer, and the communication of its numerous blessings in the power of the Holy Ghost, is the only salvation that is suited to man in his fallen and perishing condition. In the full proclamation of such a salvation is to be found the best hope of a world that lieth in the wicked one. It is in proportion to the faithfulness with which such a salvation is proclaimed that the interests of true religion grow and prosper. It would be worse than idle to contend that vital godliness is confined to the Presbyterian Church, but it is not claiming too much for that church to say that within its fold, under whatever skies its banner floats, are to be found a people who, in the quiet unobtrusive simplicity and excellence of true christian character exhibit, in a marked degree, the gospel's saving power.

In 1869, an event occurred which, in the estimation of

many, foreboded serious disaster to the growing prosperity of the Irish Presbyterian Church. In this year, the Irish Church Act was passed, disestablishing Episcopacy, and depriving the Presbyterian Church of the Regium Donum grant. This grant was originally given by Charles II., in 1672; withdrawn entirely by James II.; renewed and doubled by William III.; augmented from time to time in successive reigns till, when it was abolished, it amounted to fully \$200,000, affording to each minister on the roll of the assembly an annual allowance of about \$350. It is not to be wondered at that the event was contemplated by many with serious apprehensions. Hitherto, congregations had depended largely on this endowment for the support of their ministers, but from this time forward the burden was to rest almost entirely on their own shoulders. They included in their ranks few of the titled ones, and only a comparatively small percentage of the rich and wealthy of the land. Their members were engaged, for the most part, in agriculture, and, though certainly able to make suitable provision by their voluntary contributions for the comfortable support of their ministers, yet little disposed, it was feared, from the want of previous training, to rise to the full height of their added obligations. The issue speedily dispelled all such disturbing apprehensions. The liberality of the people rose with the emergency, and placed the ministers of their beloved church in circumstances of greater worldly comfort than ever. The Disestablishment and Disendowment bill was framed very much after the model of the Clergy Reserves secularization bill passed by the legislature of Canada in 1854. Every minister was at liberty to continue to receive his quota of the royal bounty, as formerly, during his lifetime, or to commute his interest in the grant for a lump sum to be paid at once, and it was left to the General Assembly to decide whether the commutation should be effected in the private

interest of each minister, or in the interest of the Church at large. With a magnanimity worthy of all praise, with only five exceptions, the ministers resolved to subordinate all personal considerations to the welfare of the church, and to commute their "bounty" in her interest. They thus cast into her treasury the magnificent sum of about three millions of dollars, which is to stand as an endowment fund for the church for all time, and at present yields an annual revenue of about \$125,000. The laity came forward, and, in a like spirit of large-hearted liberality, resolved at a public meeting held at Belfast, that it was their "duty to aim at such a sum as will increase the income of all participants in the commutation fund and their successors to at least \$500 a year, independent of congregational payments." The Sustentation fund was thus established. The value of the commutation capital at the present time is about \$3,000,000, yielding a yearly revenue sufficient to give fully \$225 a year to every minister on the roll of the Assembly. The Sustentation fund should amount to at least \$150,000 yearly, if the aim originally contemplated were reached, but it has seldom gone beyond \$110,000, the two combined yielding \$425, instead of \$500,—the sum aimed at when the Sustentation fund was set on foot. It will thus be seen that though the combined allowance to each minister from these two funds falls considerably below the sum originally contemplated, it is very considerably in excess of the "bounty," at the time of the passing of the church Act. At the same time the stipends throughout the church have risen from \$190,000 in 1870 to fully \$246,000, for the present year. In 1854, the total average income of each minister was \$550; in 1869, it was \$750 nearly; this year it has risen to \$885. It may be added that the church possesses at present a capital of nearly \$6,000,000, and her total income for the past year reached the grand total of \$1,113,130.

Whilst the agitation that preceded the passing of the Disestablishment and Disendowment bill was at its height, Dr. Cooke, the great ornament and the trusted leader of the Irish Presbyterian Church for half a century, quietly passed away. He died, at his residence, Ormean Road, Belfast, on the 13th of December, 1868, leaving behind him a name for sanctified genius and splendid services to his church and country that will never die. It was his own desire that his funeral should be as private as possible; but the people of Ulster resolved that "in deference to his life and labours, and as a mark of respect to his character and work, there should be a public funeral." His family could not resist a desire so general and so strongly expressed by the people between whom and the deceased the strongest bonds of affectionate regard had long existed. Accordingly, on Friday, the 18th of December, the funeral took place, presenting such a magnificent tribute to the excellence and worth of departed greatness as Ulster had never witnessed before, and may never witness again. The corporation of Belfast, the representatives of almost every corporate body in the province, the presidents and professors and students of the various colleges, and a very large number of the clergy of all denominations in the city, and throughout Ireland, joined in the procession, which was fully two miles in length. Among the pall-bearers were the Primate of Ireland, the Moderator of the General Assembly, the Bishop of the diocese, the Mayor of Belfast, and the members of parliament for the borough and county. From an early hour business was suspended in town; the leading places of business along the line of route were draped in mourning. The streets were lined with thousands, and as the solemn procession moved slowly and stately on, many a cheek was bathed in tears at the thought that the venerable form of the mighty dead would be seen no more on their streets. On

the day after the funeral, a public meeting, consisting of all classes and creeds, was held to consider what was due to his memory. After due deliberation it was resolved to erect a statue of the deceased in bronze to be placed on an appropriate pedestal in one of the leading thoroughfares of Belfast. This has been done. A fine bronze statue of him now stands in College Square. On the 11th of May, 1888, occurred the centenary of his birth, and the day was turned into an occasion for imposing celebrations in Belfast, Dublin, and other leading towns in Ireland, as a tribute to the exalted character of the departed, in memory of his great and valuable services to his church, his country, and divine truth, and in testimony of the esteem and veneration in which his name is still held by his countrymen.

In paying this tribute to the memory of Dr. Cooke, it would be a culpable omission to say nothing of his loyalty to the British Crown. Among the millions of her subjects, our beloved sovereign had none more sincerely and unalterably devoted to her person and government. Home rule for Ireland, which has been so eagerly discussed throughout the empire and the colonies of the empire, for several years past, found no favour in his eyes. When the celebrated Daniel O'Connell, some fifty years ago, announced his purpose to visit Belfast, to agitate for the repeal of the Union and an Irish parliament in College Green, he challenged the doughty champion of the home rule movement of the day to a public discussion of the question. O'Connell declined to accept the challenge, and by his declinature exposed himself to general scorn, and the cause for which he had been agitating for years to merited reprobation. And now that the subject is again pushed to the front under another name, the same spirit of loyal attachment to the British connection that peculiarly distinguished Henry Cooke, pervades the whole church he did so much to purify and elevate. When Mr. Glad-

stone's "Government of Ireland Bill," providing for the establishment of a separate parliament for Ireland, was introduced into the House of Commons some four years ago, a special meeting of the General Assembly was called, at which resolutions were passed, deprecating "in the strongest manner, as disastrous to the best interests of the country, a separate parliament for Ireland, or any legislation tending to imperil the legislative union between Great Britain and Ireland, and to interfere with the unity and supremacy of the Imperial Parliament." The other Protestant churches of the country vied with the Assembly in strenuous opposition to the bill, and great was the rejoicing, when, in June of the same year, it was defeated in the House of Commons. If it be said that the question was purely political in its nature, and as such should not have found its way into church courts, it may very properly be replied that it was certainly more religious than political. It closely concerned, not merely the welfare, but the very existence of Protestantism in Ireland. Were Ireland a separate and independent nationality, governed by a parliament of its own, the most sacred interests of the Protestant minority of its population would be placed at the mercy of an overwhelming majority whose past history and acknowledged principles warrant the worst anticipations.

Ireland was probably one of the first countries in Europe in which instrumental music was publicly employed in Christian worship. A tradition gives a harp to Patrick, and it would seem that the church that he founded saw no wrong in a literal compliance with the commandment, "Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God." The Irish Presbyterian Church claims a close resemblance in her doctrines and practices to the early Irish Church, but, as far as instrumental music in public worship is concerned, declines to follow in its footsteps.

The question whether instrumental music is allowable in public worship has of late years led to much keen discussion among her clergy and people. It first came before the General Assembly in 1868, in connection with the use of a harmonium in a small congregation in Ulster, and was debated at subsequent meetings for eighteen years afterwards, with an earnestness and often with a bitterness that threatened to rend the church in twain. Happily a truce, to last for five years, was proclaimed in 1886, since which time the contending parties have laid their arms aside, and the unhealthy agitation that had for many long years disturbed the peace of the church has sunk to rest. The same year which witnessed the termination of this unhappy controversy witnessed another occurrence hardly less pleasing and important. When the disruption of the Church of Scotland took place in 1843, the Irish Presbyterian Church openly took sides with the outgoing party, and, in consequence, the friendly intercourse with the mother church, that had been renewed in 1836 after a long interruption, was again broken off. Now, after an interval of forty-three years, it was happily renewed afresh, and at no period in their former history, were the mother and the daughter united in stronger ties of mutual affection and regard than at this moment. Intercourse of the most friendly character is also maintained with the Free Church, and the United Presbyterian Church, in Scotland.

Fifty years have now passed away since the union of the Synod of Ulster and the Secession Synod in 1840. The General Assembly met on the 10th of July last, in the Rosemary Street Church, Belfast—on the same day of the month and in the same place in which the union was consummated fifty years ago—and celebrated its first Jubilee. The occasion was one of profound interest, and the vast multitude gathered from all parts of the country, that met to take part

in the proceedings, bore witness to the strong hold the Presbyterian Church still retains on the loyal attachment of a very large portion of the Protestant population of Ireland. According to previous arrangement, papers were read in which subjects appropriate to the occasion were discussed. Dr. H. B. Wilson, of Cookstown, read the first paper, entitled "Before the Union." Dr. Killen, president of the Assembly's College, Belfast, for well nigh fifty years professor of church history in the same institution, and author of several valuable historical works well known on this side the Atlantic, followed with a paper giving "The Story of the Union." As the venerable president, now in the eighty-sixth year of his age, came forward, the vast audience rose to their feet, and, by plaudits repeated again and again, bore witness to the great affection and esteem in which the distinguished veteran is held by the church at large. Dr. Magill next gave an address on the "Baptism of the Holy Spirit." The Rev. Mr. Lyle, of Muckamore, Assembly's Convener of Statistics, followed with a short paper on "Fifty Years of Finance." Mr. Lyle was succeeded by Dr. Lynd, of May Street, Belfast, who read a paper on "The Place and Power of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland." The Rev. T. S. Woods, Ballygowan, was then called upon to describe a large Jubilee picture, which stood on an easel on the platform, in front of the audience, containing the likenesses of the surviving pre-unionist ministers with their autographs in *fac-simile*. The preparation of this picture was first suggested to the Jubilee Arrangement committee by Mr. Woods, and to its production he devoted an enormous amount of time and attention. Copies of it will doubtless come to this country, renewing to many on this side the Atlantic faces and forms associated with the most deeply cherished memories of their earlier years. The Rev. Mr. Park, Moderator of the General Assembly, as a convener of the foreign mis-

sion, then read a paper on "Fifty Years of Foreign Mission Work," and was followed by Dr. John Hall, of New York, in a speech of great power, which thrilled and electrified the crowded assembly. The proceedings of the day were closed by a reception given by a number of Presbyterian merchants of Belfast to the Assembly and the visiting delegates, at which addresses were delivered by representatives of Presbyterianism all the world over.

CHAPTER XVII.

PRESBYTERIANISM IN THE OTHER PROVINCES.

Presbyterians in Ireland before the Ulster plantation—Provosts and Fellows of Trinity College—John Owen and Stephen Charnock—Five congregations in Dublin—Pastors of distinction—Congregations at Clonmel, Cork and other places—Several congregations that formerly existed now extinct—Causes of decay, Arianism and Rebellion of '98—Revival - Present number—Conclusion.

WE have hitherto confined ourselves almost entirely to the history of the Presbyterian Church in Ulster. The history, however, would be incomplete, if no notice were taken of the existence of Presbyterianism in the other provinces.

Before the Ulster plantation was commenced, there were Presbyterian families scattered over the country, and when Trinity College, Dublin, was founded, two of its first regular Provosts, and also two of its first Fellows, were Presbyterians. During the time of the commonwealth, Independents and Baptists were in greatest favour with the existing government, and it is worthy of record, that during this period, John Owen and Stephen Charnock—two eminent Puritan divines—officiated in Dublin. During the same period, many officers and soldiers in Cromwell's army, as well as others from England, settled in the south, originating non-conforming congregations in many places. Towards the close of the seventeenth century, there were no less than five Presbyterian Churches in Dublin, of which three appear to have been of English and two of Scotch origin. "Wood Street," one of the congregations in which John Owen ministered for some years, must have included several wealthy members in its communion, for when the "General Fund" was

established in 1710, of the £7,670 originally contributed, it gave fully four-fifths. When the Secession body sprang into existence, two congregations in connection with it, one of Burghers, and another of Anti-burghers, were established in the city. Some of these Dublin churches enjoyed the ministrations of pastors who won high distinction in the field of christian authorship, among whom may be specially mentioned Joseph Boyse, author of the “*Vindiciae Calvinisticæ*,” and John Leland, whose works on the christian evidences still command attention. They also included in their ranks not a few people of note, such as Lord Ferrard and his family, the Granard family, Lady Donegal, and the Countess of Enniskillen. Farther south, there were several Presbyterian Churches, of which probably the Clonmel congregation, which dates from 1673, was the oldest. The congregation at Cork must have been nearly as old, for prior to the year 1710, it had had thirteen successive ministers. Congregations were also formed at Limerick, Waterford, Summerhill, Fethard, and Killala, during the seventeenth century. Besides these and other congregations which are still extant, some eight or nine others are known to have existed, which have altogether disappeared, and the valuable properties they owned have been lost to the church. Various causes united in producing this unhappy result. One was the spread of Arianism, and one yet more potent was the rebellion of '98, which, in the south, was accompanied with great loss of life and property to Protestants. When non-conforming congregations were originally established in the south, they consisted, for the most part, of Puritan military adventurers from England, who never were thoroughly grounded in Presbyterian principles ; and when Arianism appeared among them, they were only too ready to accept its specious but pernicious doctrines. They were mainly made up of families which still inherited the no-popery spirit of the times of Cromwell, and

when the rebellion broke out in '98, and Romanism became for the moment the ruling power in the south, they were threatened with speedy extinction ; and if the power now in the ascendant had not been speedily overthrown, they would probably have been swept entirely out of existence. They were early united in what was known as the Southern Association, to which Queen Anne, in 1708, made a grant of £800 per annum, which was subsequently increased from time to time. In 1809, a Synod of Munster was formed, by the union of two southern Presbyteries. Arianism infected this body to a large extent, but as the century advanced, the revival of orthodoxy that was spreading fast in the north found its way southwards, and in 1854, most of the congregations connected with it were incorporated with the General Assembly. Since, the cause of Presbyterianism has made very considerable progress in the south and west of Ireland. When the union between the Synod of Ulster and the Secession Synod was consummated in 1840, there were only twenty-six congregations south of Dublin ; now there are sixty-three.

CONCLUSION.

If a tree may be known by its fruit, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland may justly be regarded as a tree of the Lord's planting. In Ulster, where it first took root, and where it has flourished most vigorously, and in all those sections of the other provinces where it has shot forth its branches, it has borne fruit whose value could hardly be over estimated. To the intelligence, energy, industry, and orderly habits, of its people, Ireland is indebted for not a little in her history that throws brightness across its prevailing shadows, and to its existence and labours in the country, very much of the earnest living Protestantism

that irradiates the gloom of her widespread darkness is to be ascribed. When it was first planted in Ulster, it found the province little better than a savage wilderness. Patches of the soil had been cultivated here and there, after a fashion, but the land lay for the most part untilled, varied at intervals by forests, in which wild beasts roamed in unchallenged freedom, and by swamps covered with rank vegetation, which in summer generated a malaria that was dangerous to human life. Manufactures, and trade, and commerce were unknown. But only a few years had passed away, when a wondrous transformation had been effected, and as the years continued to roll on, the change became more marked and perceptible, until the country every where presented signs of an advancing civilization. Forest, and swamp, and wild beast, had alike disappeared. The untilled soil had been converted into well cultivated farms. Comfortable homesteads had dotted the whole surface of the country. Large and thriving towns had sprung into existence, and trade and commerce had commenced that career of progressive advancement that has since contributed largely to the prosperity of the province. By-and-bye, manufactures, imported partly by French Huguenots, and still more by Scotch Colonists, and which are now giving remunerative employment to tens of thousands of its population, came to quicken the march of improvement. Nor was this all. When the Presbyterian Church was first planted in Ulster, the physical state of the province afforded no inapt representation of the moral and spiritual condition of its inhabitants. For ages, its population had been noted for indolent and disorderly habits, and, though at the time they were professedly christian, the utmost stretch of the most charitable judgment could have hardly accorded them much beyond the name. In appearance and dress, and manners and education, they were but little in advance of the condition in which their fore-fathers were, when in ages long gone by, Patrick had given

them the gospel. But in a comparatively short time, all this was marvellously changed. Now, in energy and industry, in orderly habits, in wealth, in education, in christian knowledge and deportment, the larger portion of the population of Ulster compares favourably with the population of any other part of the Empire. As for the Presbyterians of the province, who constitute by far the major part of its Protestant population, certainly very few of them are unable to read and write, and as for gaols and work-houses, they are more conspicuous by their absence from such places than by their presence. According to the census of 1881, Romanism was credited with 87.8 per cent, Episcopacy with 8, and Presbyterianism with only 3.6 per cent of the pauperism of the country. On the 31st of March, 1885, there were confined in Irish gaols 35,288 prisoners, of whom, 29,766 were Romanists, 3,690 were Episcopalians, and only 1,762 were Presbyterians. A garrison of nearly 30,000 troops is usually kept in Ireland. Of these, hardly a tenth is quartered in Ulster, and even this tenth would certainly sink to a much lower proportion, if the population of the province were wholly, as it is only a little more than one half Protestant. The Royal Irish Constabulary, which is charged with the preservation of the peace and the protection of life and property in Ireland, numbers fully 12,000 men. Of these policemen, Cork requires 24, for every 10,000 inhabitants, Kilkenny, 36, Westmeath, 45, Kerry, 32, Galway, 46; Down, Antrim, Derry, and Armagh, only 11, each, and Tyrone, 12. In christian intelligence and character, Ulster presents a still more marked contrast to the other provinces.

It cannot be said that the present superiority of Ulster is due either to natural advantages or to state patronage. Compared with the north, the south of Ireland possesses more and greater natural advantages. Its soil is more

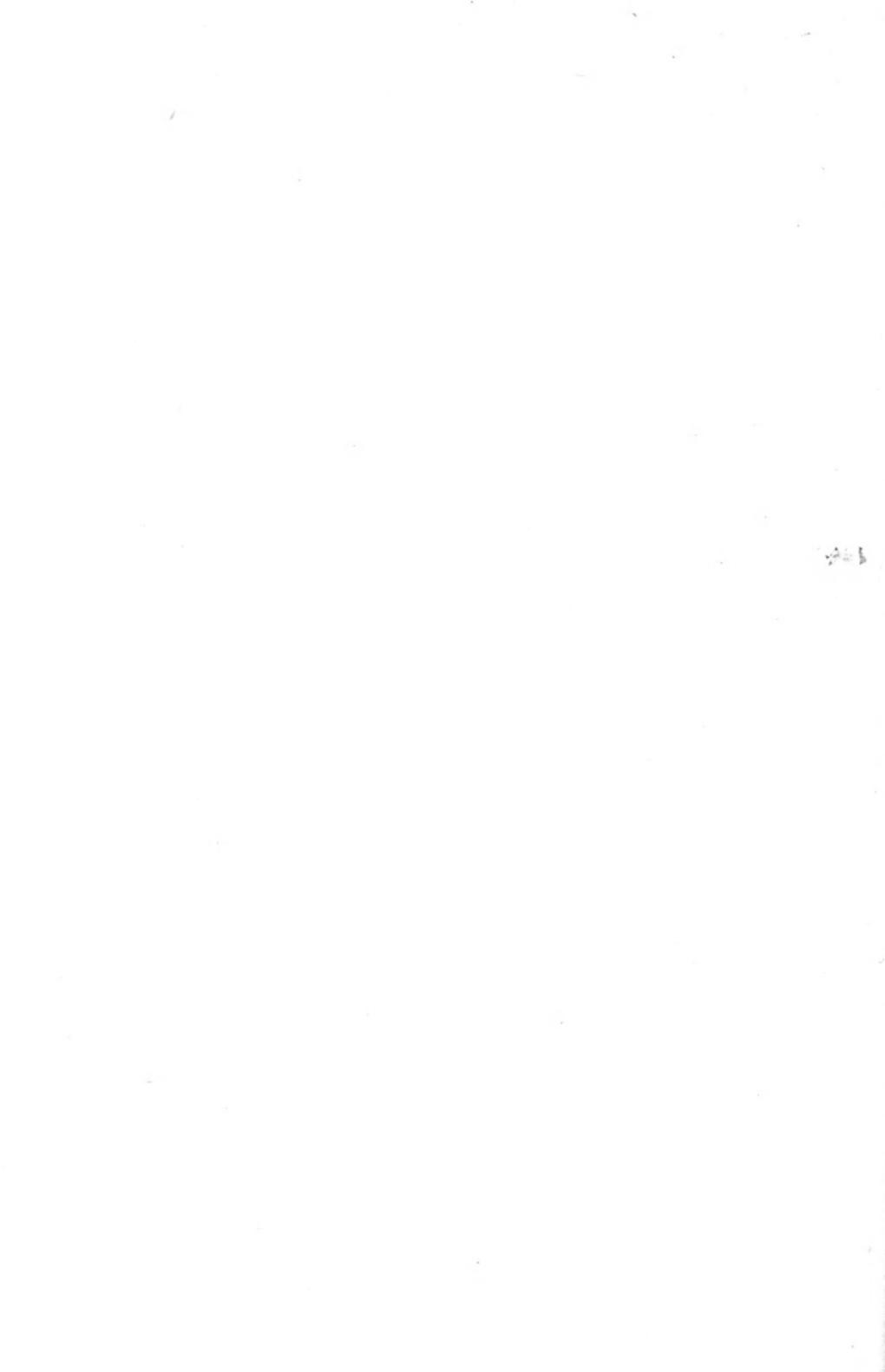
fertile; its climate is more propitious; its position from a mercantile point of view is more favourable; its harbours are safer and more commodious. And as for state patronage, it has been made abundantly manifest in the course of the preceding narrative that the Presbyterians, who have always constituted the large majority of the Protestant population of Ulster, instead of having been pet favourites of the government, have, up till a comparatively recent date, been treated with persistent cruelty. On this score, they have had about as much reason to complain as the Romanists. Again and again, the ministers of the Presbyterian Church were obliged to flee from the country to escape fine and imprisonment. For long their worship was illegal, and it was only at dead of night or in some secluded spot, that they could engage in its celebration. For long, they dare not openly meet in Presbyteries, or venture publicly on the ordination of ministers. For long, the members of their flocks were deprived of the right to serve their sovereign and country, unless at the sacrifice of their religious convictions; and for a still longer period, they were harassed by the bishops' courts, and, if they had been married by their own ministers, their children were branded as bastards. Nay, it is not too much to say that the Presbyterians have had much more just cause of complaint than the Romanists, for, whilst the latter were always disloyal, and often running into rebellion, the former, with the exception of one slight aberration from their usual course by a few of their number, were always loyal supporters of the government, rendering on more than one occasion services of the greatest possible value not only to Ireland but also *to the empire at large*. The Romanist may complain of the penal laws, but it should be remembered that for their existence he had but himself to blame. They were the strong but necessary restraint laid upon the hand of the assassin ever ready to strike a

dagger blow at the national life. For their existence, in the case of the Presbyterian, no such valid plea can be urged. In answer to the sneering question, "What is Presbyterianism?" once put in the English House of Commons, Lord Castlereagh replied, "*It is Protestantism double distilled.*" The question was rightly answered from a religious point of view; but from a political, it might be answered by saying that it is *loyalty double-distilled*. No section of the population of Ireland have been more ardent and active in supporting the revolution settlement of 1688, and in maintaining the interests of the British government in the island. And yet no section of the people of Ireland have been more unkindly treated. Still, in spite of intolerant parliaments, and adverse influences from other quarters, the Presbyterian people of Ulster have kept toiling away in the province, improving its agriculture, building up its trade and commerce, establishing and multiplying its manufactures as well as other industries, until to-day, in all the elements of substantial prosperity, it is quite on a level with any other part of the empire, and much beyond any other province in Ireland. All the while they have been loyal to the faith their forefathers carried with them when they first settled in the country, and to-day they have the proud satisfaction of knowing that at no former period in her checkered history was their beloved church in a more healthy and flourishing condition than at present. In the Presbyterian College, Belfast, and the Magee College, Derry, she possesses ample facilities for the training of candidates for her ministry. In the growing and increasing liberality of her members she is furnished with greatly enlarged means for maintaining the ordinances of religion within her own communion, and for supporting missions at home and abroad; in the learning, and zeal, and piety of her clergy, she enjoys an ample guarantee for her present stability, and her future progress; and in the

prominent and influential position she now occupies in the land, she has reached an elevation in which, whilst certain to command respectful consideration in high quarters, she need fear no opposition, come from what source it may. Fifty-six congregations of Covenanters and Seceders, all loyal and true Presbyterians, still exist outside her pale, but there is good reason to believe that in a very short time she will be able to reckon all these among her most ardent supporters. Then, she will have become in a higher and fuller sense than ever the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, enrolling in her ranks the whole of the Presbyterian people of the country, and in a better position for carrying out all the great purposes for which she has been planted in the island, and especially for evangelizing the whole land and for gathering its entire population within her communion. When such a desirable consummation shall have been brought about, she will have reached a higher position still, and have become—who will dare say that such a consummation is not approaching? the Church of Ireland, extinguishing for ever in the grand achievement her labours have at length happily accomplished the disastrous antagonism that has long kept Celt and Saxon apart, and uniting both alike in loyal and loving allegiance to the Prince of Peace, in earnest endeavours for the welfare of their common country, and in zealous efforts for the evangelization of the world.

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